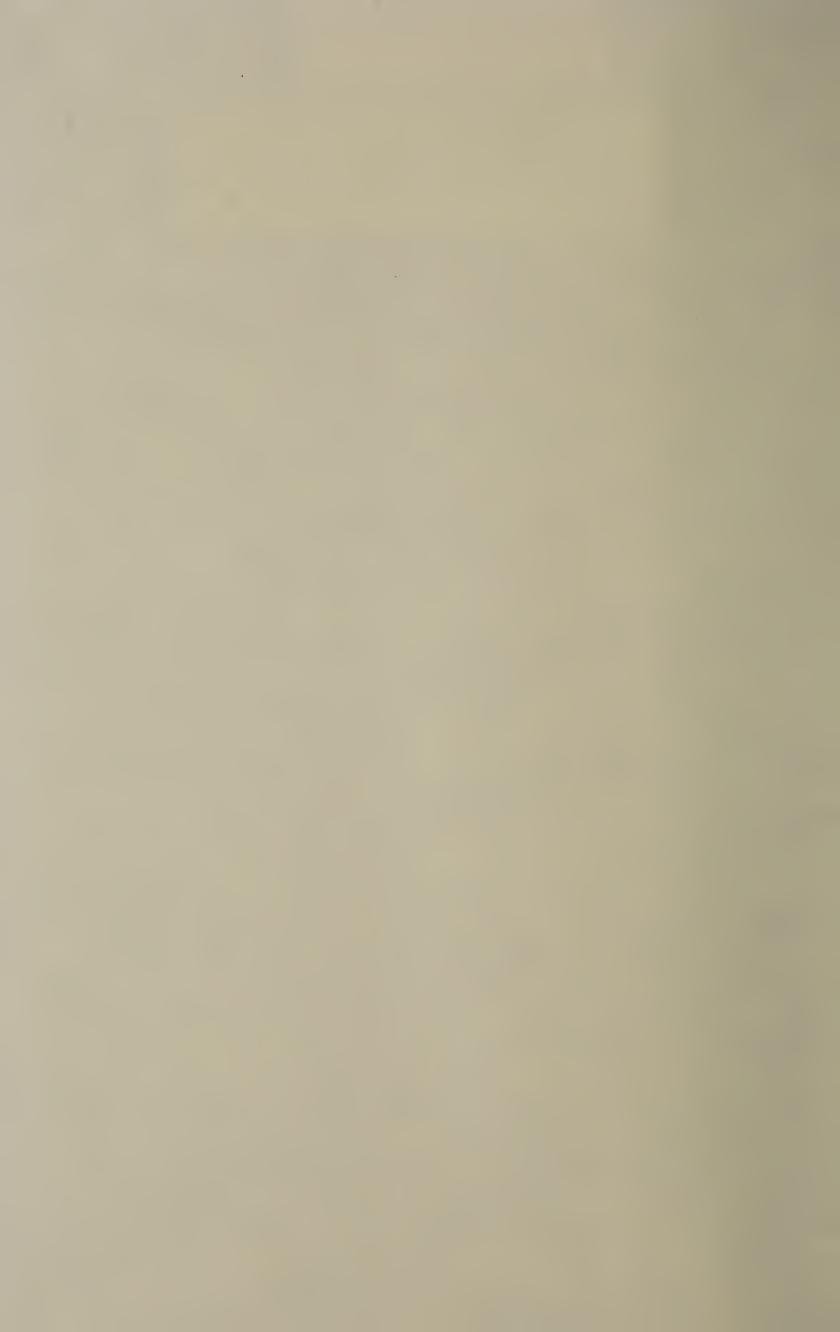
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STUDIES IN AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY

Number 3

RAY FRANK LITMAN: A MEMOIR

BY

SIMON LITMAN, DR.JUR. PUB. ET RER.CAM.



AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
3080 BROADWAY
NEW YORK 27, N. Y.
1957





RAY FRANK LITMAN (Photograph taken in 1923)

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PREFACE

This is not intended to be a biography but merely a chronicle of a number of events in the life of Ray Frank Litman, events which brought her to the fore as an inspired preacher and lecturer and an able journalist in the nineties of the last century and which led her to give up her public career to become a helpmate to a University Professor, a friend and advisor to the Jewish students on the University of Illinois campus, a power for good in the community in which she lived.

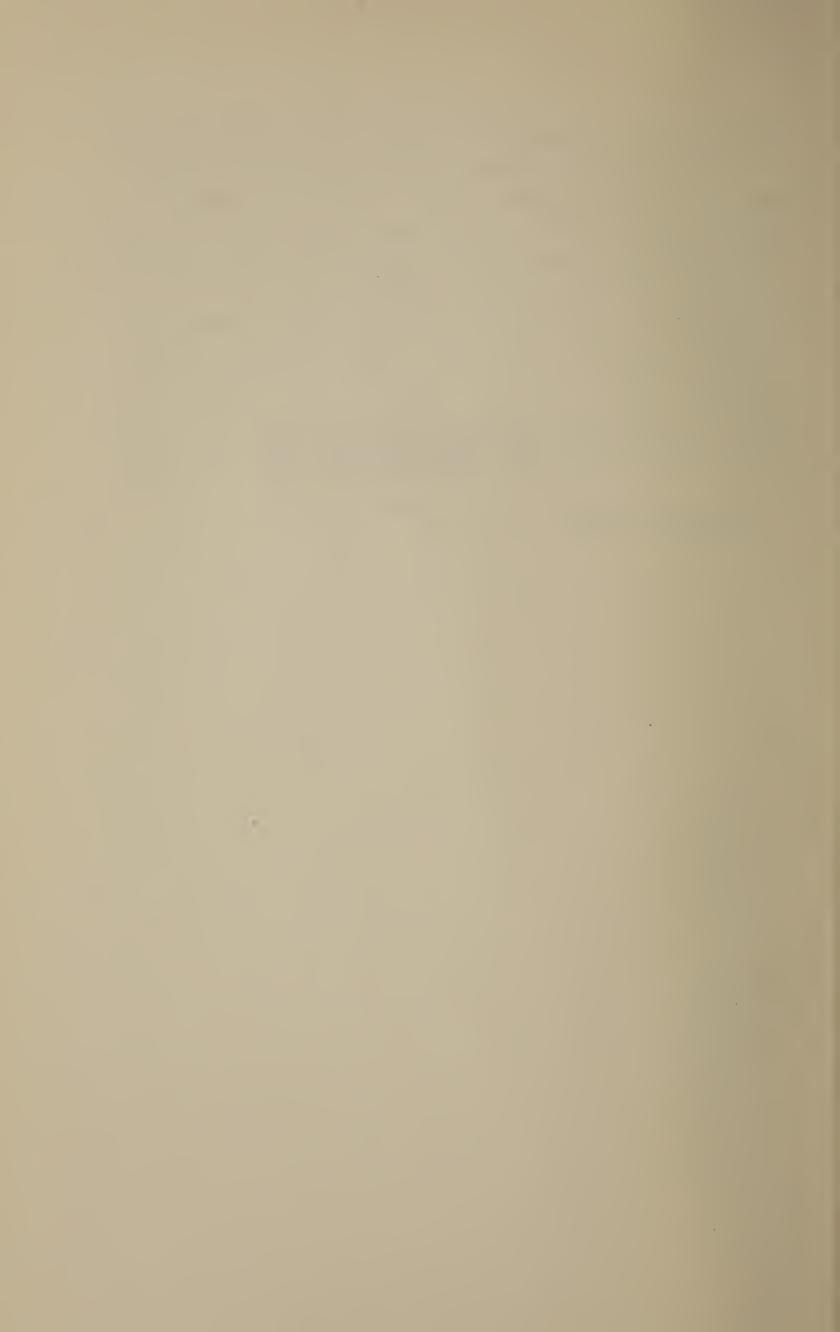
In many parts of the story Rachel or Ray as she was usually referred to speaks for herself. There are excerpts from her writings, sermons and lectures, which show more eloquently than the author of this narrative could have done her ability to impress and to move people; there are testimonials from those who came in contact with her at the height of her activities and tributes from those who knew her in her later life; there are letters from some well known literary persons who were impressed by her brilliant intellect, her passionate search for truth and her charming personality; and last but not least there are recollections of one who shared with her for many years all that a joined life can give

in heartaches and in joys, in plans and in hopes, in aspirations, in disappointments and in achievements.

This story would hardly have been written if it were not for the encouragement received from Anita Libman Lebeson who added some of her own recollections to it, as one who came under Ray's influence when Anita was a student at Illinois, and to whom I herewith express my deep appreciation. I wish, also, to express my indebtedness to her, to Rabbi Isidore S. Meyer and others on the Publication Committee who gave of their time and effort in preparing the manuscript for the printer.

SIMON LITMAN

A LIFE DEDICATED







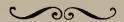
RAY FRANK LITMAN
(Photograph taken in San Francisco,
California [date unknown])



RAY FRANK LITMAN (Photograph taken in San Francisco, California, circa 1897)

Ι

"If you will deliver a sermon"



On October 10, 1948, Ray Frank Litman was in a coma in a Peoria Sanatorium where a few months earlier she had been admitted suffering from hardening of the arteries which affected first her heart and then her mind. As I was sitting in the room listening to her heavy breathing, absorbed in thoughts, I heard a knock at the open door. Looking up I recognized a gentle young lady, a patient in the Sanatorium, whom I had seen with Ray a few times before. "May I come in?" "Please do," I replied. She came in and sat down. We sat silently for some time, then she turned to me and asked: "Can I touch Mrs. Litman?" When I gave my consent, she bent down, kissed Ray's hands and went out. I was once more alone. It seemed to me that Ray felt my nearness and there was so much I wanted to tell her. Two nurses came in. The end was approaching. We stood at the bedside, helpless to prevent the coming of what the doctors and the nurses told me was to be a painless winding up of Ray's earthly existence. At 4 p.m. the end came.

Thus ended a life dedicated to a search for truth and beauty, to the expounding of what Ray considered divine in religion and art, a life which enshrined her in the nineties of the last century as a modern Deborah, as one of the outstanding personalities on the Pacific Coast, a life of lecturing, preaching and writing, whose eloquent sermons brought harmony on many occasions among her coreligionists and whose inspired portrayals of the wise utterances of the sages and of the fiery exhortations of the prophets drew enthusiastic praises from Jew and Christian alike, a life characterized in later years by lesser driving force but by the same adherence to righteousness and fairplay, by the same devotion to high ideals, by the same zeal to be of service to humanity in general and to the Jews in particular.

Ray was born in San Francisco in 1864 or 1865 (I am not sure of the exact date) of Orthodox parents. She was educated in public schools and in 1879 graduated from the Sacramento High School. She later attended the University of California in Berkeley and took courses under Professor Joseph LeConte and Professor George H. Howison. Soon after graduating from High School she went to teach in Ruby Hill, Nevada. Her pupils were the children of miners and also the older folks for whom she conducted night classes.

On her father's side Ray was a descendant of Rabbi Elijah ben Solomon, "Gaon of Vilna" (the great one of Vilna), to whom the Jews flocked from all lands for advice, instruction and blessing. If one is aware of this fact, wrote C. A. Danziger in the *American Jewess* of 1898,

the greatness of her mind and the matchlessness of her personality are explainable . . . like her ancestor she unites a

knowledge of many literatures with a great all-embracing love for her people and for all mankind.¹

Ray's father, Bernard Frank, was possessed of a pioneering spirit; he was strong-willed and unafraid. When I met him, though he was past eighty years of age, determination still shone in his grey piercing eyes; one felt that in his early years he would not have brooked any interference with what he set himself to do. He attended regularly orthodox services, though he was not in sympathy with what he considered the lack of proper decorum in the synagogue and was in favor of a number of changes in the procedure.

Ray's mother who died in 1888, at the age of sixtythree, was a pious woman, quiet and unassuming; she was fond of reading the Bible, bestowing loving care on her children and performing uncomplainingly her wifely duties which led her at times into adventurous paths as she accompanied her husband in his journeys.

Bernard Frank died in 1906; with his death I lost an understanding and sympathetic friend. When Ray and I had a controversy, he invariably took my part; this, in my opinion, was as it should be. I was so reasonable (at least this is what I thought), and Ray was so temperamental.

After six years of teaching in Nevada, Ray went to live in Oakland, California, where, in order to earn a livelihood, she gave private lessons in literature and elocution and wrote for periodicals.

Although her childhood was spent in a non-Jewish environment she became very much interested at an early age in Jewish problems. Thus she wrote in 1896 to the Reverend S. T. Willis of New York in response to his inquiry about herself:

¹ Pp. 19–21.

One of the prime factors of this early interest was the desire to understand the cause and meaning of prejudice against the Jews . . . I wanted to know why people called themselves Christians and yet hated Christ's people.²

Soon after Ray settled in Oakland, she was asked to conduct Sabbath school classes of the first Jewish Congregation. Her work attracted the attention of the adults who began to come in ever increasing numbers to listen to her expositions of the Bible and of post-biblical history. When the rabbi of the Congregation resigned, she was asked to become the Superintendent of the school; this gave her, as she put it, an opportunity to introduce a number of reforms both in the methods of instruction and the maintenance of discipline.

It was at this time that she visited the Northwest as a correspondent of some San Francisco and Oakland papers. Her interesting letters from Spokane Falls, Portland, Tacoma, show the reactions of observant eyes and an alert mind to the scenes which she saw and the people whom she met. While descriptive in their nature and giving an account of general conditions in the growing communities, they dealt particularly with the Jewish people as they were adapting themselves to their new environment. Thus on October 8, 1890, she wrote from Portland:

Burn star of Jerusalem with faithful light, but your beams say plainly the restoration lies here. Portland viewed from one of her beautiful mountain gates which seem always ajar to show her rare loveliness, is beyond doubt one of the fairest pictures imaginable. The Jewish mind is ever ready to see the good and the beautiful; therefore it is not surprising that in a place where nature has done so much, the Hebrews have

² Transcript of her letter to the Rev. S. T. Willis, in the Litman Collection [=LC], at the American Jewish Historical Society.

made for themselves a city of homes, in many ways truly wonderful...³

While admiring the elegant homes built by the Jews of Tacoma, their liberal hospitality, and their progressiveness, she spoke regretfully of their lack of interest in religious matters.

It is an odd thing, [she wrote in 1890] and a subject that affords much food for reflection, but it is true that the more oppressed our people are, the more stringent the laws against them, the greater their faith in God and the firmer their belief that Judaism is a grand old creed which stood the test of centuries and which is worth perpetuating. It is also true that the more tolerant the laws which govern them, the greater the civil and religious freedom of the land of adoption, the more cause they have for being thankful, the slower they are to acknowledge the mercies of Heaven, the quicker they are to find fault with the creed which stood them in good stead in the past, and the quicker they would like to rid themselves of all pertaining to Judaism as they once understood it....⁴

In a letter from Sacramento she wrote:

We have become doubtful as to whether one may look for aught else in Sacramento than corrupt legislation, waste basket scandals, poor sidewalks and mosquitoes. Therefore it may interest readers of the *Times and Observer* to know that if civil affairs are not what they should be, the religious affairs of our Jewish brethren of this town are progressing most satisfactorily. . .

On last Friday evening congregational singing was . . . introduced into the services. In a schule in which empty seats were few your correspondent had the pleasure of seeing tested that which for so long a time she has been advocating, *i.e.* congregational singing. If the favor with which she saw this innovation, though it cannot be properly called innovation,

³ Ray Frank Litman's Scrapbook [=RFLS] in LC, p. 64.

⁴ Ibid., p. 66.

since singing is at least as old as Judaism, if this first success is worth reckoning, then congregational singing, the greatest and purest of inspiring powers, has come to Sacramento's Jews to stay, has come to make permanent harmony and Godliness...⁵

She praised the work of the very efficient Rabbi, Joseph L. Levy, who

within a very short time, after taking charge of an indifferent, discontented and opinionated number of individuals in regard to Judaism, this young and earnest theologian had converted these differences into what is probably the model congregation of the State....⁶

A unique event took place, unique both in her life and in the annals of American Jewry, when she visited Spokane in 1890, then known as Spokane Falls. It happened to be on the eve of the High Holy Days and she made inquiries concerning the location of the synagogue as she wanted to attend services. When informed that there was no synagogue and there would be no services, she called on one of the wealthy Jews in town, to whom she had letters of introduction, and expressed surprise that a town containing many well-to-do Jews should be without a place of worship. The man, who knew Ray Frank by reputation, said, "If you will deliver a sermon we shall have services tonight." Ray acquiesced. At about five o'clock on that day special editions of Spokane Falls Gazette appeared on the streets announcing that a young lady would preach to the Jews that evening at the Opera House. The place was crowded. After the services were read, Ray spoke on the obligations of a Jew as a Jew and a citizen. In an impassioned appeal she asked her coreligionists to drop their dissensions

⁵ Jewish Times and Observer, Nov. 7, 1891, in RFLS, p. 71.

⁶ Ibid.

with regard to ceremonials and join hands in a glorious cause, that of praying to the God of their fathers. She emphasized the fact that they shirked their duty if they did not form a permanent congregation and that by being without a place of worship and all that it stands for they were doing an incalculable harm to their children. After Ray finished her sermon, a "Christian gentleman" who was in the audience arose and said that he had been very much impressed by what he heard and if the Jews would undertake the building of a synagogue, he would present them with a site to be used for that purpose.

On the next day, New Year's morning services were held at which Ray spoke again. She was asked to remain in Spokane during the High Holy Days and preached in the evening of the Day of Atonement. The solemnity of that occasion gripped the "Maiden in the Temple" as one of the Spokane papers called her. She reached their hearts:

Ladies and gentlemen, and in considering this is Yom Kippur eve, I know you will permit me to say—friends, brothers and sisters; for surely tonight is one of the most solemn and sacred periods in the lives of Israelites, for tonight, at least, we must be brother and sister in letter and spirit.⁷

Thus Ray started her sermon:

My position this evening is a novel one. From time immemorial the Jewish woman has remained in the background, quite content to let the fathers and brothers be the principals in a picture wherein she shone only by a reflected light. And it is well that it has been so; for while she has let the strong ones do battle for her throughout centuries of darkness and opposition, she has gathered strength and courage to come

⁷ RFLS., p. 68.

forward in an age of progressive enlightenment to battle for herself if necessary, or prove by being a noble helpmeet how truly she appreciates the love which has shielded her in the past.

I can scarcely tell you how much I feel the honor you have this evening conferred upon me by asking me to address you. For a woman to be asked at any time to give council to my people would be a mark of esteem; but on this night of nights, on Yom Kippur eve, to be requested to talk to you, to advise you, to think that I am tonight the one Jewish woman in the world, may be the first since the time of the prophets to be called to speak to such an audience as I now see before me, is indeed a great honor, an event in my life which I can never forget . . . I have been requested to speak to you concerning the formation of a permanent congregation . . . I was informed that the number of Hebrews and their financial standing was sufficient to warrant an established congregation . . . Then, I said, how is it that you are content to go on without having neither schule nor a Sabbath school?... I was answered that such a difference of opinion existed among you, so many were prejudiced against reform, the remainder stubborn for orthodoxy... Think of it, ye Israelites, the chosen of the earth, so divided as to how you will worship Jehovah that you forget to worship at all! You who have received divine protection through centuries of danger and oppression, you whom the prophets say are to survive for the grandest destiny of man, you to whom has been vouchsafed every blessing—because you do not agree as how you will do this or that, how you will say "thank you Almighty," therefore you do not say it at all.

O, you intend saying it all in good time! There may be repentance at the eleventh hour, but who can say which hour may not be the eleventh one? This is the time for action—right now, and our solemn Yom Kippur is right now of our existence... Drop all dissension about whether you should take off your hats during the service and other unimportant ceremonials and join hands in one glorious cause... It is not necessary to build a magnificent synagogue at once; that can be done in time. The grandest temples we have ever had or the world has ever known were those which had the blue sky

for a roof, and the grandest psalms ever sung were those rendered under the blue vaults of heaven...⁸

She concluded the address by asking those present:

In the name of all we Hebrews hold dear to be patient with each other. Drop all personal feelings in the matter, and meet each other half way over your differences; give each other a hearty handshake for the sake of the cause, and I prophesy the Heaven will crown your efforts with peace and prosperity. From tonight resolve to do something.⁹

This event in Spokane Falls attracted widespread attention on the Pacific Coast. She was asked to speak from the pulpits in a number of places of Jewish worship and succeeded in healing a number of congregational differences. The papers invested her with the title of "laterday Deborah," as the first woman since the priestesses and prophets of old to minister to her people, to ascend the pulpit in order to teach the eternal verities of Judaism.

The Spokane Falls Spokesman, in its issue of September 23, 1890, referred to her as a well known newspaper correspondent. Interviewed by that paper she spoke of journalistic work as suitable for women, though she qualified this statement by adding that

There are certain kinds of newspaper work which would be better left untouched by women. They have ample opportunity to shine as correspondents or contributors on topics agreeable and appropriate to the sex.¹⁰

Citing the writing of George Eliot and Harriet Beecher Stowe, she stated that they showed that women can write as well as men.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ American Hebrew, Oct., 1890, pp. 183–184.

¹⁰ RFLS, p. 63.

That is why I am in favor of girls going into journalism. It is a nursery of the novelist and writer.¹¹

The Daily Elko Independent of January 7, 1885, contained, to my knowledge, the first published article of Ray's. It was a condensation of a paper which she read at the Teacher's Institute in Elko, Nevada. In it she pleaded for an education which would go beyond providing pupils with merely what was practical. She asked whether one can shut the eyes to the past, present and future glories of the various sciences because one is only in search of practical information. She suggested that one may as well stop cultivating flowers "because cabbages are better to eat." She referred to Locke, Pestalozzi, Spencer who advocated what she called general education. Beyond a study of what produces practical results should go an inquiry into how such results are achieved:

It is the duty of each one interested in the welfare of our young minds to see that means are provided whereby a knowledge of the science of common things may be taught in our schools in a more rational manner than it is taught at present.¹²

The paper concluded with an admonition that

a practical education is after all, but the same old Midas demanding for an Apollo gift that can turn all it touches into gold. Should this prayer be answered, it would be as of old with the dreadful penalty attached.¹³

"What would you do if you were a rabbi?" was the question asked of her by *The Jewish Messenger*. In her reply (May 23, 1890) she enumerated a number of

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹³ Ibid.

things which she would refrain from doing. She would not

endeavor to impress the nature of my calling by loud and shallow words, nor by pompous bearing unbecoming the man of God; [she would not] consider a stylish residence, fine garments, including a silk hat, nor any of the jewels representing the twelve original tribes, as absolutely essential to keeping up my position as a priest of the temple, nor would I degrade the holy office by assuring any world political boss, that I would capture the votes of my co-religionists "because being a rabbi they will do as I tell them," as one rabbi of my acquaintance remarked; [she would] not sell religion in the form of pews and benches to the highest bidder. If she were, a Reform rabbi she would not be funny or sarcastic at the expense of her Orthodox brother, nor "if I were orthodox would apply harsh names, nor deny a state of future bliss to my brother of modern opinions."

A few other "do not's" followed and the paper concluded:

Would that the spiritual mantle of Elijah more often donned or at least thrown over the very material broadcloth of our modern rabbis. Women are precluded from entering the Holy of Holies; but it is a great satisfaction to contemplate what we would not do were the high office not denied us.¹⁴

This letter to *The Jewish Messenger*, prompted *The Jewish Times and Observer* to propound another question to Ray "What would you do if you were a *rebbitzen*?" Her reply appeared in the June 20, 1890 issue of that publication. After paying tribute to a few of the women, wives of rabbis, whom she had the pleasure of knowing, women who have done much good, whose lives were daily records of unselfishness, she proceeded to contemplate what she would do if she were placed in

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 66.

that position. The letter revealed Ray as a thoughtful and considerate better half of the rabbi.

If I were a rebbitzen [she wrote] my first duty would be to thoroughly acquaint myself with the flock over which my husband watched. I would want to know them in their homes. should study their ways and their means, and endeavor to teach them that I could be their friend and their neighbor. When a new family comes to town I would never say "who are they" or "what are they" but "where are they?" The people of the various states of Russia, Prussia, Austria and other climes should be my husband's American congregation, and my American brothers and sisters in Judaism. If I were a rebbitzen, I would interest myself in the poor and ignorant of my people; none should know them better than I. I would encourage them to strive for a better condition of things, and I would devise ways for their self improvement. My home should be of that kind where all worthy should find a welcome, not of wines, but of cheerful wisdom; the unworthy should not be afraid to enter the portals for relief and advice....

Were I a *rebbitzen*, I would help to establish a Young Women's Hebrew Association. Think of the wonderful amount of good such an institution could do....

If I were a *rebbitzen*, Friday night should be made so beautiful in my home that all should wish to imitate the celebration of our Sabbath in true orthodox style. No modern innovation can be so sweetly solemn, so joyously peaceful as the orthodox Friday night.

The letter concluded by stating:

Were I a *rebbitzen*, the sick, the poor, the wretched should know me for a friend, should trust in me, and my highest reward would be the love of the people, and, well, of the rabbi.¹⁵

At about this time there appeared in *The Jewish Times and Observer* Ray's article on "How to interest a

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 64.

Congregation." While praising highly the orthodox observance of Sabbath on Friday nights in the home, she wrote:

Ceremonies were made by men and can and must be altered by men to suit the times... Aside from the fundamental laws, God has given us no forms by which He is to be worshipped. All that is perfectly sincere is acceptable if in accordance with the commandments and all that tends to His glorification must be right in His sight.¹⁶

She was very much impressed by the success of Doctor Martin, the revivalist, who drew immense crowds while many empty pews were to be found in the churches. She attributed his success to his earnestness, to the simplicity of the language which he used and to congregational singing. Advocating such singing in the Temple, she contended that

If the dancing of Miriam was acceptable to the Lord, then singing, a direct gift from His hand, will surely be so. No one can doubt its influence for good and where and who is the orthodox man or woman who can prove by any logical reasoning or by anything in *The Creed proper* of the Jew that it is wrong. Give us congregational singing which comes direct from the heart and ascends as a tribute to God. We can well spare the paid choir which does not always understand what it sings or believe in the God to whom it is salaried to sing. Give us simplicity in our rabbis, sympathy with things which practically concern us, give us earnestness, and our synagogues will no longer mourn in their loneliness.¹⁷

In a similar vein was written Ray's paper on "The Prayers that are Heard" which appeared in *The Jewish Times*, on May 15, 1891; in it she contended that the repetition of ceremonial prayers attended by complete

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁷ Ibid.

indifference of what is being said is just as bad as a total neglect of prayers.

In either case, God appears forgotten; therefore is it not just as well to omit set prayers providing that they are replaced by sincere supplication and thanksgiving at any time the individual happens to think of it?... Spontaneous prayer is actual communion with God; it is rarely long but it is so deep that only angels can fathom it. Remember that sincere earnest prayer has upheld us through centuries of trouble, remember that prayer is boundless in its blessings; that all good desires come through this source; that earthly success must make it the staff on which to lean; remember that prayer turneth darkness into light, trouble into rejoicing, and openeth the blue of the heaven to us.¹⁸

She admonished fathers and mothers to teach their little ones to pray

not in a selfish way, not because they want this or that, not to observe ceremonial forms alone, but to know that God is love; that He can only be approached by unselfish prayers . . . Make them understand that all things are ordained; that the natural order of events cannot be changed because of selfish prayers ... Tell your children that prayers to be heard must be such that reassure our faltering souls that there is a Father in Heaven even though we cannot see Him. Say to them that just as a mother in a darkened room holds fast the hands of a child to quiet his fears, so God's love reaches out through every darkness, through every trouble, waiting for prayerful sincerity to clasp it and be comforted. O, parents could you but realize how indifferent Israel has grown, could you but understand the shallowness, the hollow mockery of much you are offering the Lord who brought us out of bondage, out of the fiery furnace, then would you tremble for the future of Judaism....¹⁹

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁹ Ibid.

In another sermon dealing with "The Sounding of the Shofar," Ray told the parents that

while the prayers are being read your sons will come in with toothpicks in their mouths, which they gnaw vivaciously. After they have partially devoured them they will yawn audibly and cause your daughters to giggle, with the final result that during the most solemn part of the services these young American Jews will walk out to buy cigarettes or ice cream. Most of the matrons will be intent on their prayer books until a certain hour, when thoughts of the good dinner will manifest itself . . . The heads of the families will keep up a continuous display of watches, look anxiously at the rabbi and then at their wives . . .

And call ye this religion, and was I not right in saying the outward business may not be as usual, but that there is virtually no change from the life of other days, unless it be a change for the worse...

Indifference has for a time assumed the garb of hypocritical piety; but how ill fit the garments. And call ye this religion...

O, my brethren are you not forgetting that the Eternal is the God of knowledge and by Him actions are weighed? ... What are ye waiting for? Think ye heaven will send a special warning to you? It has been sent over and over again, but ye have disregarded the signals, for ye are blind and wilfully so; and as ye strive against Him so shall ye be "dismayed." O, Israel your vales are rent and your tents are scattered ... Your creed is divided; thousands weep; tyranny holds you slaves, and pitious [sic/] cries avail not ... the skies darken, and the rumble of prejudice is heard in our midst, but still we stand indifferent, waiting for the thunderbolt which is to strike us; waiting for our Shofar, forgetting that the trumpet which is to awaken the dead will take from us everlasting life....

In the last part of the sermon, she asked the listeners to come with her

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

to one bending with the weight of years, whose locks are hoary with the frosts of seventy winters, but whose face is radiant with divine sunshine of peace.

Whether the elderly man was a figment of her imagination I do not know; she spoke of him as one who dwells

away from synagogues builded by men, away from the centers of civilization, in a little mountain town, who each year goes into the forest to pray, not once but as many days as the elements permit....

She quoted him as saying:

I lived among trappers and Indians, but always a Jew. Did I need grander temples to worship in?... In the murmurs of the pines I hear the psalms of David; the fragrance of the incense is as of old, the winds speak to me in His voice, and the solemn stillness is his presence. But best of all I hear the Shofar every time I care to listen; hear it is proclaiming life and peace everlasting to all who perfect themselves ... My sons and their wives go to the schule in town, I go yonder [pointing to the forest]. They go to hear the rabbi, I go to listen to God....²¹

In a "Passover Sermon" (April 17, 1891) Ray commented on the stemming of the prejudice and on the fact that

our Gentile brethren are beginning to appreciate the worth and beauty of Israel's creed . . . Christian divines breathe sincere, loving prayers for their Jewish friends and thus the cheering messages come to us . . . And so, brothers and sisters, while God and enlightened humanity await your return let us glance at ourselves and learn how well prepared we are for the crowning . . . Last Pesach we took from our homes the leaven, and doubtless most of us resolved to take it from our hearts . . . How this same old leaven had time and again bothered us, but this time we intended to make sure that the

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 89. Mrs. Litman spoke of her father in this way to Anita Libman Lebeson.

chomez [leavening] had left our lives. Our temporal abode should henceforth be so beautifully pure that the spiritual inmate might realize the high destiny to which it has been ordained . . . It may have been that thoughts of our children were uppermost in our minds as we made the high resolves; for we have not been exactly easy concerning these children of ours. They do not apparently have a clear conception of what Judaism means to them; they lack that sweet reverence for religion which the children of old had, and without which there is no true goodness . . . "And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up" ... too truly we show that we have not hearkened to the words, nor have we taught them to our children. Our children are deaf to our prayers, adamant to our persuasions, but we have been likewise. It has been business, business, all the year round. . . . The hour that will not return to us so much of the coin of the country is an hour lost. On one side of the earth millions are in bondage to a despotic tyrant, fettered hand and foot, but still soul free, loyal in spirit, as loyalty is understood, here in America, thousands in soul slavery, bound body and spirit to business; understanding their duty but deliberately neglecting it. And is this the way we are preparing for our grand mission? Is this the best picture of ourselves we can exhibit to the civilized thinking people of the earth? . . .

Once again Passover is with us, once again we are trying to rid us of the chomez. May few refuse to pay their "tithes" into the "treasure house" and may the "apertures of heaven" soon "pour upon us the blessing overwhelmingly."²²

There was an ever-present problem which occupied Ray's attention in 1891. It was the persecution of the Jews in Russia. With a pen dipped in anguish and scorn she castigated the iniquities of the Czaristic regime and fought the apologists. Pogroms were the nightmares of this time.

In an article, "A Sign of the Times," she attacked the

²² RFLS, p. 72.

despotic Russian ruler's declaration that the Jews must either become Greek-Catholics or go into exile; she described how

men, women and babies were driven from their homes, lashed as we would be ashamed to lash our cattle, were perishing from lack of food and drink.

She spoke of the "infamous" Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatieff's statement that he would make Russia too hot to hold the Jews "rights or no rights." Then no longer able to contemplate the ghastly picture she turned her attention to the country "where peace dwells and where Justice and Truth are Twin monarchs, to America." She spoke of the order issued in Oakland to the Grand Army of the Republic on Decoration Day to attend the services in a Jewish synagogue. She was heartened by the knowledge that

the greatest and most enlightened power of all sent her honored soldiers to listen to a sermon on law, liberty and love by a Jewish divine in a Jewish synagogue.

She described how in a place dedicated to the God of Israel men of every creed sat

reverently listening to the words so full of love for the living, of beautiful touching eulogy for the dead that there was witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of grizzled veterans and youthful maidens applauding the rabbi, even while the tears run down their cheeks.²³

In August of the same year she sharply criticized a dispatch from London which appeared in the San Francisco Examiner under the heading "Russia—a Defamed Nation. Stories of Jewish Persecution have been Greatly Exaggerated." The dispatch was purported to contain

²³ Jewish Times and Observer, June 12, 1891, in RFLS, p. 71.

the statements made by Mr. Arnold White who went to Russia as a representative of Baron Maurice de Hirsch. Ray pointed out a number of misstatements contained in the account of the interview with Mr. White and concluded:

Let him who doubts the horrors of Russian persecution go aboard any one of the emigrant ships which steam in the port of New York and he will find plenty of evidence to substantiate all that is told of Russia. Let him question the now self-supporting colonists of Vineland; let him read of Russia by Russian authors; let him visit Russia as a patriotic American and when he finds he no longer belongs to himself but to Russia, let him measure Russian manhood by his own and then tell us if reports are greatly exaggerated.²⁴

When Creed Hammond wrote that "The Jew suffers in Russia for the same reason as the Chinese in the United States," Ray sent a letter to the San Francisco Examiner (April 6, 1891) challenging that statement. "What ignorance is this, O, Mr. Hammond!...Sir, you know better, the world knows better." She referred to the loyalty of the Jews to the country of their adoption, spoke of their thrift, of their desire to live adequately, of their hospitality, of their liberalism. "Look about you in the world of science, letters, art, philanthropy."

Perhaps, Mr. Hammond, you have been misquoted. I hope so, I have often heard the name of Creed Hammond mentioned as a representative Californian and American, a man of integrity and intelligence; a character inconsistent with that of one who heaps injustice and ignominy on the helpless and the downtrodden. I think that you will agree with Curtis [George

²⁴ RFLS, p. 69. Cf. Leo Shpall, "David Feinberg's Historical Survey of the Colonization of the Russian Jews in Argentina," in the *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*, vol. XLIII, no. 1 (Sept., 1953), pp. 37–39, 44–55, regarding the activities of Arnold White in Russia.

W. Curtis' article in *Harper's*, August, 1891]²⁵ that the key to the mystery is jealousy, a key that has opened the gates to more avenues of bloodshed than all the wet mops of prejudice or the brooms of indifference will be able to make clean.²⁶

The letters were followed by "An Appeal for Action."

Russia [wrote Ray,] has four million of Jews waiting to leave the land of bondage. No modern Moses has had the temerity to face this nineteenth century Pharaoh, this fanatical Romanoff and say: "Let my people go, else thou and thine will be accursed of Lord, our God."... The lands which seem to promise home and safety to the refugees are thousands of miles off, across the vast seas, and are either filled by strange people or else yet new to the habitation of man...

No hundred spies can ever map out a country which will immediately be a home to these millions of Russian wanderers. What then is to be done?...²⁷

After having discounted the United States and having referred with expression of doubt to Argentina, Ray continued:

From one quarter comes the cry, to the Holy Land, and once more to rebuild its temples and palaces. The press, secular and religious *talks* of the matter in paragraphs short and long, in editorials solemn and sanguine, and while the papers talk and the readers theorize, there flashes to us news of horrors daily and hourly perpetrated upon unfortunate beings awaiting the results of our opinions . . .

What then is to be done? Well, first let us stop talking foolishly, and as quickly as possible organize ourselves into home clubs, leagues or societies for the study of the Russian problem. The solution of this problem concerns humanity, so the gentiles say, and we know that it vitally concerns all Jews... None is so poor, no one without sufficient influence to mitigate the hardships of at least one Jewish refugee.

²⁵ Cf. "Editor's Easy Chair," in the same volume of *Harper's*, pp. 471–472, which criticizes Russia's treatment of the Jews.

²⁶ RLFS, p. 67.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

Do not stop to consider whom you will admit into your club or society, but immediately constitute yourself a committee of one for the aid of the Russian Jews. If you have a nickel, a dollar or twenty to give, you will have no difficulty in finding means for sending it on its way to do the most good...²⁸

Ray made an appeal to Sabbath-school teachers to rouse themselves and prove the nobility of their calling by becoming enthusiastic workers for the suffering people, and to mothers of Israel whose influence is limitless. "Think of the perishing little ones and the heart-broken aged, think of Judah in bondage, commence your work, and God bless you."

The plight of the Jews in Russia prompted her to write a poem which was published in *The Jewish Messenger* on April 10, 1891. It was entitled "The Token," with a subtitle "A Prophecy." In it she describes the coming to Poland of

Princes from the House of David, Worn and weary, filled with fear.

Exiles from the land of promise, Wanderers o'er all the earth, Robbed of home and robbed of kindred, Robbed of all but pride of birth.²⁹

She tells how they gave a token to the Polish ruler that they will help to change

> Frozen streams and barren valleys Dark waste steppe and mountain range

To a land of bounteous plenty To a land of light and lore . . .

So the strangers there did sojourn Countless nights and countless days Grew the land in peace and plenty

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

Other countries sang its praise... But there came a fierce invader And an awful change befell.

Gone is Polish prince and ruler Russian Czar has now his place Ruthless hands grasp at the token Try its virtues to efface....³⁰

After a few more stanzas describing the plight of the Jews came the prophecy

Once a King in chains I see thee Marching o'er Siberian snow Death to thee would be a blessing Yet still onward must thou go

Shunned by Jew and shunned by Gentile Peace to thee, for aye is dead, Czar of "all the Russias" see it Can'st thou view a scene more dread.³¹

In 1890 and 1891, in addition to her other activities Ray published a few short stories. The first, and in my judgment, the most ambitious one, appeared in the March 23, 1890 issue of the *Oakland Times*, under the title "A Snagtown Tragedy." It is the story of happenings in a mining town which changed from bustling activity of boom days to "business places closed, dwelling houses torn down for their lumber, mines shut down, mills and furnaces silent." An old miner, a strong union man, tells the story; he tells of labor conditions at Snagtown under the "tribute system"; he discusses at length how the system was responsible for the collapse:

Why, if the miners hadn't been false to each other—had not mistrusted, betrayed each other, the union never would have been broken, nor would the mines be closed today. That is all bosh about the mines being played out . . . It was not to

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

be expected that the old tunnels and drifts would hold out forever, nor every prospect prove a bonanza.³²

The old miner philosophized:

Whose fault is it that so much new ground is unbroken? Who is to blame because a class of ignorant, selfish, jealous foreigners, not satisfied to earn pounds, where they before had not earned pennies, whose fault is it, I say, these ignoramuses calling themselves tributers, should in their greed, break a union, a system and themselves along with it? . . . Well, I say the tributers are responsible for it. If they'd been satisfied to have made comfortable living as day's payment, to have stood by each other against the non union men, they wouldn't today be starving as half of them are doing.³³

The villain in the story favored the tribute system as the quickest way to break the union and he was right. And there was a Jack Roberts

as fair a fellow as lived around here, and Annie James on whom Roberts, my partner was sweet. She was a regular beauty... of medium size, slender and dark, with eyes that looked clean through a fellow. She'd been away to school, and was educated; could sing and play and was the best dancer in this section. But a wilder, gayer girl, without being bad, never came into town to set men crazy . . . Annie James caused more than one fellow to throw himself away. When I found Roberts was chasing round after her I was afraid it would not end well, for while she had no stability she did all she could to lead the fellow on . . . [And so Roberts, who] was at most times of a quiet and very determined temperament whose cool, quiet ways had not made him an easy "victim" was led on. Annie saw to it; she was "charming and persistent until she made a slave of him." [There was] no engagement between Annie and Roberts, but anyone could see he was in earnest, and as for her, no woman could have given more encouragement to love her.34

³² *Ibid.*, p. 62.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

To cut the long story short: The fickle Annie turned her charms on Johns, the villain, "whose reputation as a lady's man wasn't enviable." Aroused, Roberts, sick at heart, shot Johns and then killed himself... Poor Roberts was laid out in the Miner's Hall.

"You must let me in," a woman's voice cried out. "I killed him you know. It was my fault! O, my God, do let me in . . ." With a moan she [Annie] threw her arms over the body and laid her face upon it. Great sobs shook her slender form as she called every endearing name, and poured reproaches on herself. . . . 35

Annie left Snagtown; she went to San Francisco and there "we read in the papers that she had poisoned herself."

In 1891, the *Pacific Home Monthly* contained "A Modern Episode," a story whose title Ray later changed to "One of Many." It was a story of a girl crossing on the boat from San Francisco to Oakland.

As if stifling for air, the girl pushed back her heavy crepe veil, disclosing a face of such pallor, that were it not for the intense glitter in her large black eyes one might have thought it the face of a corpse. Her shabbily gloved hands nervously clasped and unclasped themselves, her eyes now staring into vacancy and anon glancing over the deck, or behind her into the glass windows into the saloon. At length the small shapely head sunk dejectedly on her bosom; and so she sat for minutes, still as though carved from stone, when giving vent to a deep, deep sigh, which seemingly carried with it the feeling of a lifetime, she murmured in a thrilling tone "Dear God, do help me!"³⁶

The story then introduces a young man who like the girl was full of wretchedness and who leaped from the boat overboard into the water. "Fortunately the sea was as

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Pacific Home Monthly, May, 1891, p. 13 in LC.

smooth as a warm and beautiful day could make it" and the stranger was rescued. . . .

The next day the girl went to the hospital to see the stranger.

She told him how, discouraged by repeated failures to obtain work of a suitable kind, she had resolved to end her troubles by a plunge into the sea when in answer to her despairing prayer he had come on the scene and diverted her thoughts from herself... "The horror of what you did drove the mad desire from me; and in it I see the finger of God.... Never again will I give way to despair; and I've come hoping to impress you with such faith in the wisdom of the Almighty, that never will your hand be lifted against yourself. Will you promise?" A spirit so earnest, so beautiful, looked from the pale face and moist mournful eyes that Elverton's eyes grew tearful....³⁷

He promised... and he kept his promise. There is a copy of a letter, the story does not tell by whom or to whom it was written:

For the first time in six years I today saw Elverton . . . tanned and unshaven, looking years older but altogether well. . . . He has cleared away the forest on the banks of the Spokane, whose waters help to enrich for him one of the finest farms in the country. I don't think he troubles much about that old affair which drove him to despair, for among the few ornaments in the rough, old farm house is a photograph of a sweet-faced woman, and when I remarked about it, Elverton said: "She is as grave and pure-souled as she is sweet-faced. I have just had a letter from her." . . . 38

Thus ends the story.

It was followed by "An Experience Extraordinary" in *Spokane Falls Review*. The last story published in 1891, "A Girl's Adventure," appeared in *The Girl*

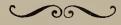
³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

Realm.³⁹ It seems to be largely autobiographical; it tells of a girl who taught in a town situated in mountains and who received a message "Come at once. Mother very ill. Mary." Because of raging storms neither trains, nor any other conveyances were leaving the place. To cover a large part of the distance separating her from her home she was permitted to ride in the snow plough. The final few miles she had to walk, walk through deep, soft snow, falling and rising again, spurred on by the thought

Mother dying! Dear Heavens. Mother dear, patient, old mother—dying, perhaps dead, and I miles away. Darling mother—"little mother" as Mary and I were fond of calling her. Dazed and nearly frozen she reached her home, after an encounter with some coyotes, who did not molest her because she did not run away from them, but stood still and stared them in the eyes; she wanted to run but could not move. "It is years ago that all this happened; but ever and anon the terror of that moment comes over me.... Again I see the wild, white road; the solitude stretching away to the lowering horizon. I see the scrubby shrubs; the skeleton trees rising out of the snow. Again the exceeding weariness of that tramp overcomes me; again the desire spurs me on to see the dear mother alive ... [And then] I turn and see the famishing brutes on the track of the living. I see again their snaky, lolling tongues, the gleam of their teeth, of the green-glossy fire of their eyes. I stand turned to stone, gazing down into the piercing points of flame. All the while I know I am praying . . . [Then came the shots.] ... Once more the faintness overtakes me, and the nightmare ends."40

"Rest thou as thou art"



I do not find more published stories from Ray's pen during the following years, but apparently while engaged in her various other activities she continued to

³⁹ LC.

⁴⁰ LC.

play with the idea of becoming a short story writer. This may partly account for her relations with Ambrose Gwinett Bierce (1842-1914?) which began on April 10, 1895.⁴¹ In the middle of that year (on July 11th) he wrote to her with regard to a manuscript which she sent him:

[I] think well of it. Your style is more lucid, your thought more definite than I had hoped. Emotions (you seem to have learned) though they are not thoughts, are the results of thoughts, and must be given to the reader in terms of thought, so that he may come to them in the same way as the writer did.

On July 16th he sent her

such comments as I thought might be useful. Of course I could help you in that way better in a half hour of "going over it together" than in a week of correspondence. It was perhaps my fault that we did not go over the first one together. Shall I tell you why we did not? I feared that it would turn out so bad that I should be embarrassed. Fancy my relief in finding it otherwise!

In commenting on one of the manuscripts he wrote:

Well, you have imagination! Seeing what you do with so

⁴¹ The letters of this journalist and author to her are in the LC. The dated letters cover the period from April 10, 1895 to Jan. 14, 1900. A few letters are undated. Concerning the biography and writings of Ambrose Gwinnett Bierce, see The Collected Writings of Ambrose Bierce, with an introduction by Clifton Fadiman (New York [1946]); Ambrose Gwinnett Bierce: Bibliography and Biographical Data, edited by Joseph Gaer [Monograph 4, California Literary Research Project]. California Relief Administration; "The Letters of Ambrose Bierce," in Van Wyck Brooks, Emerson and Others (New York, 1927), pp. 149-157; Paul Fatout, Ambrose Bierce: The Devil's Lexicographer (Norman, Okla. [1951]); Grattan C. Hartley, Bitter Bierce: A Mystery of American Letters (Garden City, N. Y., 1929); Twenty-One Letters of Ambrose Bierce, edited with a note by Samuel Loveman (Cleveland, 1922); Carey McWilliams, Ambrose Bierce: A Biography (New York, 1929); Walter Neale, Life of Ambrose Bierce (New York, 1929); Vincent Starrett, Ambrose Bierce: A Bibliography (Philadelphia, 1929) and Franklin Walker, Ambrose Bierce: The Wickedest Man in San Francisco (San Francisco, 1941).

slight materials, I think it is well that you know so little that is worth knowing. What would you do with the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Rest thou as thou art—I would not like the responsibility of having a hand in setting all the rivers afire.

Suggesting a number of changes, Bierce added:

I'm of the opinion that what the villain of the piece—bad luck to him! demanded should be something rather better worth all that storm and stress than a kiss. There are readers with the scoundrel sense of humor who might have the hardihood to smile and recall the Shakespearean title *Much ado about Nothing*. There is no use making it obvious that the author is a girl. I advise that the villain-hero make a direct attempt at the heroine's virtue—not an indirect, or imaginary, or implied attempt at her general corruption—a purposeless effort merely to lower her moral "tone." What reason would he have for that?⁴²

Bierce concluded his criticisms by saying: "You have in you to write great stories."

No great stories came from the pen of Ray. While those that have been published and those left in manuscript form compare more or less favorably with many stories appearing in our weekly and monthly publications, they show that Ray was not at her best in creating fictitious characters and situations. Her talent lay in a different direction. It would have been just as well if she did not try her hand in short story writing; to some extent it brought to her a feeling of frustration. As a lecturer she could soar to great heights carrying her listeners along with her into the realms where ideas and ideals are born, as a preacher she could heal congregational squabbles and give sermons which could bring a touch of the infinite to the congregants, but her wings

⁴² The letter is undated and was probably written in 1895.

were clipped when she attempted to enter the domains of a Bierce, a Poe, a Bret Harte, or a Chekov.

I find two references to Ray's attempts to break into the short story field when she was in London. One is a letter from Alice Cockran, of *The Lady's Realm*, dated December 5, 1898, in which she wrote:

I like the story which you sent me very much. I sent it up to the printers yesterday and I hope you will get a proof promptly.⁴³

What the story was like I do not know, as I do not find it amongst Ray's papers. Perhaps she did not think that it was worth keeping.

A few letters were exchanged between Ray and A. Hutchinson of *The Windsor Magazine*. From the manuscripts which she submitted the publishers agreed to accept one entitled "How? Why?" They offered her one guinea for all the rights in it. It was under 1,000 words in length and Mr. Hutchinson "was afraid that they could not offer more." Other manuscripts were returned with statements usually employed in order to soften the pill of rejection. Hutchinson thought that the work showed considerable cleverness and expressed the hope that she would send in more stories, somewhat less fragmentary if possible. Her work, according to him, showed latent power. Ray was offended; she refused to accept the guinea for "How? Why?" and the incident was closed.

Ray had written a number of poems, a few of which were published. In one entitled "Sailing" she wrote:

My bark is lightly laden With gold and silver wealth; But I've a precious cargo

⁴³ LC.

Of cheerful, blessed health.
For ballast I have Reason
My sails they are of faith;
Though darkness be about me
I dread no seaman's wraith.

The storm may howl around me The waves to foam may turn; But God is ever near me His presence I discern....⁴⁴

Of the few poems left in manuscripts, I like the following best:

PLAN WELL

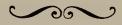
Alone in my silent chamber. Alone in the midnight still. With only a flickering taper And shadows playing at will.

Alone in front of the embers Dying upon the hearth; With thoughts of past and present Holding me fast to earth.

A form comes forth from shadows
Clothed in a garment long;
One hand carries a volume
The other holds a song.
The specter hands me the volume,
Turns the leaves of the song
I read these words of wisdom;
Time adjusts both right and wrong.

Plan then thy course of action Shape then thy life so well. That not alone past and present But future too shall tell.⁴⁵

"Plan then thy course of action"



In the first week of January, 1893, Ray went to Cin-

⁴⁴ LC.

⁴⁵ LC.

cinnati with a view of taking some courses in Jewish ethics and philosophy at the Hebrew Union College. *The Cincinnati Star Times* of January 11, 1893 gave a lengthy account of an interview with one it described as "A famous Jewess who has been called a Female Messiah." ⁴⁶

Asked what gave her the idea of working in the field she had selected she replied:

I have always felt a delight in the study of philosophy and particularly that part of it which may be called ethical . . . If you mean to ask how I came to lecture the reason is not far to seek. I taught Sabbath school classes in Oakland and was very successful. The talks which I gave my Bible class for some reason or other began to possess an attraction for the older folks till I found that week after week I was giving my Bible class talk to quite large congregations . . . Public lecturing was no hard task for me as I was never afflicted with stage fright even from the first . . .

It was the ability in me or an infinite amount of patience in my audience which has made them listen to some very lengthy lectures of mine.⁴⁷

Speaking of the reasons for her coming to Cincinnati she said:

As far as I can see now I will try to learn the differences between the different forms of Jewish creed and endeavor to assimilate them, that is, if they can be assimilated . . . 48

She referred to the success of her endeavors amongst her coreligionists in a number of Pacific coast towns where she

brought together spirits before so inharmonious that people

⁴⁶ Vol. 56, no. 9; RFLS, p. 90.

⁴⁷ RFLS, p. 90.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

who possessed them thought that they were separated by an impassable abyss.⁴⁹

They have formed congregations, built temples and called rabbis to guide them. To her Judaism seemed the simplest religion in the world.

I think that the reason there are so many different shades of belief in it is the ignorance of many of its followers. How I will make the Jewish people see things from my point of view I cannot yet say, for at present I am like a man who starts to build a house. He must get the material before he begins to build. I am now in search of material.⁵⁰

Dr. Isaac Mayer Wise impressed her as a dear old gentleman; she did not feel strange in his presence because she had heard and read so much about him and because he had a way of making a stranger feel at home. He told her that he knew of her success as a speaker and that she was at liberty to take any subjects taught in the college and in any way she desired.

While in Cincinnati she spoke at a meeting of the Mound Street Temple Culture Association on "Form and Art in Criticism." According to *The Cincinnati Times Star* (February 7, 1893),

it left on hearers little question as to how she had held congregations spellbound during her lectures on religious subjects in the Pacific Coast States. Her presence was admirable and she spoke with a fervor that seemed inherited from the tropic climate of old Palestine.⁵¹

The Rochester *Jewish Tidings*, of February 17th, in reporting this lecture told how after a few introductory remarks by Dr. David Philipson

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

there came forward a young lady of girlish figure, fair features, expressive, however, of will and determination, of flashing dark eyes and brunette hair... Her voice [wrote the reporter] is strong but sweetly modulated, and consequently aside from her remarks, it was a pleasure to sit there and listen to her words.⁵²

In her address Ray dealt with what was good form in social life as well as in literature, sculpture, painting and music. In the course of her remarks she spoke of conditions in Holland when the country became prosperous after it overthrew the political and religious tyranny of Spain and which produced at that time a Rubens who in his Kirmess and a number of other paintings showed what were the corollaries of too easy a life. Rubens' soul rebelled at the brutalizing effects of such a life.

While she was in Cincinnati Ray was urged to devote her time to the study of Jewish theology—but she replied that her main interest was outside of that field. She preached when the occasion demanded it but was spending much of her time lecturing on various topics both of Jewish and general interest as well as doing some writing.

In Chicago, in 1893, some wealthy Jews wanted to form a congregation with her as their spiritual leader. Rabbi Isaac S. Moses, one of the well known divines of that time, wanted her to accept the call but, as on many other occasions, she declined the offer. (San Francisco Chronicle, October 19, 1893).⁵³

The latter part of 1893 was spent by Ray in Chicago. The event which impressed her most was the Congress of Religion (San Francisco Examiner, November 12,

⁵² LC.

⁵³ San Francisco Chronicle, Oct. 19, 1893; RFLS, p. 96.

1893). 54 She met at that time the Bishop of Zante, of the Greek Church, which oppressed the Jewish people for a long time. She saw this Bishop and Rabbi Emil G. Hirsh laughing and chatting together and later heard the Bishop deliver an eloquent address in favor of the Jews.

In answering questions about herself, she remarked:

It has been said that I am ambitious to be ordained a Rabbi. Now really I do not think that I am ambitious; I only aspire. But I even do not aspire to the office of Rabbi, I could never be one; that is thoroughly masculine. But I do aspire to that work which the rabbis seldom care to do.... I never wish to be a salaried preacher because one who is paid by others must to a very great extent say what will please the ones who pay him....⁵⁵

She went on:

It has also been said that I have been trying to amalgamate the various creeds of the Jews. Now, there are no various creeds of the Jews. Judaism is universal with us. True, we may differ in the ceremony and method, but we all have the same creed. . . . What I wish to reconcile is the differences of opinion existing as to the actual work of these ceremonies. I believe that Judaism, is an evolution and that therefore there are many ceremonies used in the past which may be omitted in the present worship. 56

As a delegate, she attended the Congress on Religion, held in connection with the Chicago World's Fair, and opened the Jewish section of that Congress with a prayer.⁵⁷ In it she declared:

In times past, when storms of cruel persecution drove us [the Jews] towards the reefs of adversity, seemingly overwhelmed by misfortune they had faith in Thee and Thy works

⁵⁴ RFLS., p. 98.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ See Papers of the Jewish Women's Congress, Held at Chicago, September 4, 5, 6 and 7, 1893 (Philadelphia, 1894).

ever trusting and believing that Thou ordainest all things well. Because of this faith, we feel that Thou hast, in the course of events, caused this glorious Congress to convene, that it may give expression to that which shall spread broadcast a knowledge of Thee and Thy deeds.

Grant, then, Thy blessing upon those assembled and upon the object of their meeting. May the peculiar circumstances which have brought together under one roof, both Catholic and Jew, who for centuries have been seeking to serve Thee, though in different ways, be a promise of future peace. Grant, we beseech Thee, that this convention may be productive of that which is in accordance with Thy will.

Bless, O Lord, this our country and the President thereof, and all the people of the land. May love and peace be the heritage of men, to remain with them forever.⁵⁸

She also read a paper before the Congress on "Woman in the Synagogue." She began by saying that

it may be true that sin came into the world because of the disobedience of the first woman, but woman has long since atoned by her loving faith, her blind trust in the Unknown . . . She walked upon thorns, she bled; but so sincerely repentant was she, so firmly rooted had become her faith in the Almighty, that no amount of suffering, no change of time or circumstance could destroy it . . .

In mother, wife, sister, sweetheart, lies the most precious part of man. In them he sees perpetual reminders of the deathsin, guarantees of immortality.⁶⁰

After a few more introductory remarks both preceding and following the quotation, Ray considered the Biblical times where the religious life of the Israelites was so closely interwoven with their domestic and political life that it could not be treated independently.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 8. It was delivered on Monday, Sept. 4, 1893 at 10 A.M.

The paper was published in full (*ibid.*, pp. 52-65) and the excerpts cited herein are from the same publication. Cf. *The Jewish Tidings* (Rochester, N. Y.), Oct. 21, 1893 [LC].

⁶⁰ Papers of the Jewish Women's Congress, supra, pp. 52-53.

She argued that

when the Lord said to Moses, "And ye shall be unto Me a nation of priests and a holy nation," the message was not to one sex; and that Israelites did not so consider it, is proved by a number of women who exercised a great influence on their time and on posterity.⁶¹

Amongst those mentioned in the Talmud as having been prophetesses Ray reviewed briefly the life and work of Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah and Esther. ⁶² She said:

... the ancient Jewish woman was, above all, wife and mother, and as such she was a religious teacher, and closely associated with what might be called the temple-worship of those days.

During the Graeco-Roman period, two queens stand out as prominently influencing religious matters. Queen Salome, born in Jerusalem about 143 B. C., was of great wisdom and remarkable energy... Her tact and her power to remain impassive under the most awful circumstances are almost unparalleled in history. Her sole ambition was to preserve to the people their Pharisaic worship... [The other queen was] Helena, Queen of Adiabene, a proselyte, born in 152 B. C., [who is spoken of] in the Talmud as having done much for Judaism.⁶³

Passing to mediaeval times Ray noted that the position of the woman then differed from that of her sister in antiquity.

The princes of Judah were dethroned, their lands became the possession of strangers; yet the law lived, better understood and more sacredly guarded than ever. That this was owing, in the greatest degree, to the women is shown by the numbers [of them] mentioned in the Talmud as learned mothers and teachers...

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57.

True help-mate was the mediaeval woman, combining with greatest intelligence, stern purpose and the softest maternal qualities.

During the period of Moorish and Spanish rule, Jewish women rose to eminence intellectually and socially... [Their] learning always leaned toward the elevation of the home. That part of the Bible which concerned the home life became their especial study, and as practical preachers of religion, they have never been excelled, for they practised what they preached.⁶⁴

The paper mentioned some of the representative women of early mediaeval times, amongst them Ima Shalom, Rachel Sabua and Beruria, wife of Rabbi Meir. Passing to a later period, Ray referred to Bellet, who lived in Orleans in 1050 C. E. and who, according to Graetz, taught the women of her town their religious duties. There was also a whole circle of learned women in the family of Rashi, who were highly educated and acted as religious teachers. A number of women at that time were interpreters of dietary laws, on which the Mosaic law laid much stress. 65

Ray referred next to Miriam Shapira who was the principal of a rabbinical college and whose lectures compared favorably with those of her contemporaries, also to Donna Benvenida Abarbanel, into whose charge the prime minister of Naples gave the education of his daughter and who esteemed her as a mother. This good Jewess, whose intelligence and righteousness were known throughout the land, never forgot her creed and her people.

From the book of the memorial of the dead of the Jewish congregation at Worms, Ray cited the names of

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 58-59. Cf. Heinrich Graetz, History of the Jews (Philadelphia, 1894), vol. IV, pp. 409-410.

a number of women who were remembered for their learning, their regularly attending the synagogue, for giving their lives to benevolence, and for supporting students of the Bible.⁶⁶

Passing to the eighteenth century, she spoke of Krendel Steinhardt, who was known as the "Rebbezin," and Sarah Oppenheimer, daughter of the Chief Rabbi of Prague, and Sprenza Kempler, blessed with beauty, knowledge and piety, who could quote the Mishna from memory, and Bienvenida, wife of Rabbi Mordecai of Padua, who held disputation on the Talmud and the Mishna with some of the greatest scholars of her day. Thus the author, after having shown woman's capacity in religious matters, asked:

If to the men of these times be accorded credit for having performed their duties well, if as scholars, as expounders of the Law, they live in fame, what shall we say of the women, who under the most adverse circumstances rose to eminence in the same field of labor?⁶⁷

Most of them were wives of rabbis, intellectually they were their compeers, practically they excelled them.

They built synagogues, controlled colleges, and stipended students. All in all, they have in the past earned the right to the pulpit, even as nature created their sensitive beings to act as its finest interpreter.⁶⁸

The paper paid tribute to the keen-visioned practical woman of the Middle Ages,

whose knowledge was of men and whose wisdom was of God ... [whose] children received [from her], as a heritage, patience, courage, fidelity, reverence, honest God-fearing souls, the richest treasures of men. What matter how the winds of

⁶⁰ Papers at the Jewish Women's Congress, supra, pp. 59-60.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 61.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 61-62.

fortune blew, the Jew was secure from total shipwreck. He carried as a talisman the instructions of his mother.⁶⁹

Centuries have passed. In this country the Jews are in

a land of freedom, of homes, and the Jew, we find him so grateful that he has well-nigh forgotten to what he owes his salvation. He has forgotten, else how to explain the empty temples, the lack of religious enthusiasm, lack of reverence of children for parents, lack of that sacred home life which has made for us an honored place in history . . .

Every woman should aspire to make of her home a temple, of herself a high priestess, of her children disciples; then will she best occupy the pulpit, and her work run parallel with man's. She may be ordained rabbi or be the president of a congregation—she is entirely able to fill both offices—but her noblest work will be a home, her highest ideal, a home...

How is the liberty enjoyed? Go to the synagogue on Friday night; where are the people? . . . Go there on Saturday, the day of rest, of holy convocation. Where are the people? . . . Every one and everything can be attended to but God. For Him they have no time. With whom lies the blame? Where are the wise mothers of Israel today? As we sow, so we must reap. Costly temples with excuses for congregations will not do, friends. Better the old tent for a dwelling, the trees and skies for synagogues, and reverent, God-fearing men and women, than our present poor apology for religious worship. 70

A few more paragraphs followed in which she blamed women for backsliding and exhorted them to bring to the Temple the Samuels to fulfill the Law.

As mothers of Israel I appeal to you to first make of our homes temples, to rear each child as a priest by teaching him to be true to himself.

If the synagogues are then deserted let it be because homes

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 62.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 63,

are filled; then will we be a nation of priests; edifices of worship will be everywhere.⁷¹

When Ray came back to Oakland in November, 1893, a number of Pacific Coast papers spoke of the event as the return to her home town of the first woman rabbi. All protestations to the contrary, the title clung to her. Even when she returned from Europe in 1902 after a few years of absence from the United States some letters were still addressed to her as a rabbi which both amused and annoyed her.

Upon her return to California Ray spoke on November 23, 1893, in San Francisco under the auspices of Unity Lodge No. 273 Free Order of B'nai B'rith on "The Russian Jew as he is supposed to be and as he is." She recited the many baseless charges recorded against the Russian and Polish Jews seeking a refuge on American shores, and

refuted each charge from personal observation as well as from statistics which she quoted freely.⁷²

She also took to task the German Jew and rebuked him for his dislike almost tantamount to hatred of the Polish Jew, considering him much inferior and less capable or desirous to take advantage of all the opportunities modern civilization is affording than himself.

The *Jewish Times and Observer* of June 1, 1894, tells of an address delivered by Ray before the Congregation Beth Jacob.

The handsome little synagogue was crowded to the door with a very attentive and highly delighted audience.

Ray spoke on "The Torah and Your Children." She kept her audience spell-bound with her eloquence which was

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 65.

¹² Jewish Voice (St. Louis), Dec. 8, 1893,

happily couched in such plain and simple language that even the youngest child present could understand. Her touching and truly pathetic word picture of what she saw upon the arrival of an immigrant ship in New York harbor with a load of Jewish Russian refugees "brought many an unbidden tear to the eyes of her deeply interested listeners."

"Why I Preach" was the title of an article which appeared in the *The Californian*. It shows the mystical gropings of a perplexed mind and a bewildered soul seeking the clarification of the problem involved in the answer to the question.

The words "Why I Preach" [she wrote in an allegorical vein] envelop me as I move from my desk into the space, as faster and faster I go away from valleys, up hills, through gorges, over mountains; tired I pant for breath, but go higher and higher. I am dropping from weariness, but a dynamic force sends me on . . . I suffer every pain, but my vision is blind to my physical self. All I know is that I am, that I suffer, that in some strange way the universe assumed the form of Why I Preach and I am compelled to travel on.

The author awakens from a deep and troubled sleep and finds herself upon what appears to be a high grey wall. She describes in zig-zagging movements her advances and retreats until she reaches the edge of the wall which means: "Man's limitations." A great abyss stretches below and she is tempted to spring off the edge, but she is held back by something within her, whispering: "so far shalt thou go and no farther." She travels to the other side of the wall and gazes down:

Oh glorious, oh wonderful sight [she exclaims] below me lies the world of man, a slowly revolving ball encircled by a

⁷³ Tear-sheets of *The Californian*, March, 1894, pp. 502 (LC). See RFLS, p. 102. The quotations that follow are from this publication.

rainbow zone of progress. Now I distinguish forms of men and women changed into beasts of burden. I see Prophecy called Madness, I see Nobility wounded, dying. I see Mercy pleading in vain. I see Charity rebuked. I see Hypocrisy decked in Theology. I see woman losing her womanhood. I see labor reviled and despised. I see Luxury called Necessity... The mysterious flaming words "For Thee, for Thee" appear and reappear... Oceans, continents, mountain ranges, rivers, cities, buildings, people, people everywhere, beasts of burden, reptiles, fishes, fowl, trees, insects....

Myriads of objects confront Ray, each object emitting a peculiar glow, the glow becoming a flame, as if the innermost part of all things is fire.

I see Power pointing the finger at Law; Law moving behind Justice. I see Wealth pointing at Poverty, Poverty pointing to Ignorance, Ignorance to Crime. . . . I see Commerce trading in souls, Falsehood standing in pulpits; Persecution naming itself Religion.

In subsequent paragraphs she describes how an angel touched her heart and pointed to the world below. She asks:

Oh my angel, if thou are indeed for me how may I go from here to the world below? I would be of my brethren!

She moves towards the angel and they travel for many days and many nights. She is not weary any more as great peace had come to her.

She beholds a strange and wonderful tree guarded by a flaming sword.

I know that it is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. From the light of the sword come the words—For Thee. From the tree I break a bough. I know I hold in my hand the staff of Moses. I kneel and raise my hands in adoration of the Eternal. I pray that all knowledge be mine.

She finds a stairway under the tree. Arising, she takes

the staff in her hands and continues the journey. There is much symbolism in what follows; one is almost confronted with images such as one finds in many of the modernistic paintings. The article concludes:

I go down. I will tell all I know to the world. I will tell that the Eternal preached an everlasting sermon to Nature; that Nature understands and holds it sacred; that each in the world is for the other; that For Thee is not for one but for all; that men heard the sermon on Sinai and on the Mount, but that they have failed to interpret the message; that men must learn from nature; that she is the greatest of God's creatures; that sky, ocean, nations, wrecks, babes, worms preached ages ago and continue to preach; that all men must preach whether they will or not, but until they learn to interpret the Law aright, they will preach the false instead of the true... In conceit, in ignorance they will walk with arrogance on their wall of limitation. I, knowing this, feel I must, wherever and whenever I can preach my message.

On August 21, 1894, Charlotte Perkins Stetson asked Ray to join the Pacific Coast Women's Press Association. "I want earnestly," wrote Mrs. Stetson, "to get the nobler and more thoughtful women to join us for the sake of all we are here for." She asked Ray to come to an informal reception given by the Pacific Coast Women's Press Association at her home on September 4th, and also to an evening entertainment on September 6th "An Evening with Characters in Literature." "I want you in costume, you grave splendid woman—something noble and heroic."

This letter was followed by one written on September 7th. After describing the good work which had been done by the association during the three and a half years of its existence, Mrs. Stetson wrote:

So now I seek more boldly than before to say to such as you—"Come with us! Give, give royally of her high dower,

make your strength our strength, lend us the dignity of your presence and your name; bear with the essential limitations of a new form of life among women—be great enough to mingle with the little ones and carry them—so shall good come to us all more quickly!"

Ray apparently spoke of some neglect at the Sunday meeting of the Association's Congress.

Did no one tell you . . . that yours was the noblest voice of all that spoke that week—the Greatest there? . . . Because I recognize you as one of the world's great—therefore do I call on you for great service, great patience, great love. What matter is a little pain? [There follow passages in which Mrs. Stetson expressed her wish to know Ray better, to look at her] weapons with a warrior's admiration; admire your horse and trappings, study your chart, suggest additions to your equipment. . . . When you are in the city come; come at any time, to eat—to sleep—to talk. Count me as one you know.

On September 14th, Ray replied at length to Mrs. Stetson's letter. In this reply she wrote:

So full of earnest beautiful sentiment was your missive that it merits first of all thanks; for the kind things said of myself and for the noble hopes of all women, I am appreciative. It was unnecessary for you to have told me you were activated by no "small motive" when you asked me to join the P. C. W. P. A.74 Only those lacking the highest of all blessings—insight—would so accuse you.... I endeavor to shape my actions by my highest desires—believing desire to be the first and innermost principle of development. The development is either regressive or progressive, but ever comes from the source—desire; and by it we grow like gods or devils. With such a belief, I dare not long retain a thought whose very birth I deplore. Resentment is not in me; anger finds in me a reception place but, thank God, no abiding place; therefore long ere your letter reached me, what I may have imagined righteous indignation had given place to other and I hope nobler thought . . .

⁷⁴ Pacific Coast Women's Press Association.

In relation to what you have said concerning women; the necessity for organic alliance, etc. I agree with you, but as to the method, I am not so sure you are right. It has occurred to me, always from experience, that we often encourage always unknowingly, the very things we decry in the opposite sex. We appear to be conquerors whereas it is the case of Hercules at Lerna over again; we cut off the head of one serpent and two spring from the wound . . .

You write "I want to know you better, to know the way you have come, what you count worth seeing and where you hope to go." I wish I knew ever so little about Ray Frank-but after much thinking I am well convinced that comparatively I know nothing and less than that about myself. I smile, with tears just back of the smile, when I hear myself termed a "modern Deborah" for I know that the fly crawling over my paper undaunted by my big questions, is possessed of powers beyond me . . . I, a daughter of Judah, have come down the ages over all sorts of ways, beautiful and terrible, and today stand at the cross roads of civilization at a place where the centuries glide into each other, and thus know that their wedding proves our continuity—our divinity . . . With such strength as God has given me, I have girded on mine armour to fight prejudice, no matter what its form, to help establish Justice, the heir of heaven and earth . . . As to where the conflict will lead me, I do not know, but am assured it is all right. I have no reward, but have a mighty desire for peace ...

Again, thank you for your kind invitation, and as we pass down the lines may a goodly message ever be reflected from face to face, and from heart to heart....

In March, 1895, Ray was invited to attend as "one of the executive staff of ladies" the inaugural ball given for the newly elected Governor of Nevada. In Carson City she was the guest of Governor and Mrs. John E. Jones, who, according to the Nevada papers "have not ceased to do all in their power for her pleasure." In response to a request signed by Nevada legislators, she delivered a

¹⁵ See the *Daily Nevada Tribune* (Carson City), March 1 and 6, 1895 [RFLS, p. 120], and *ibid.*, March 19, 1895 [RFLS, p. 122].

lecture on "Art" in Carson City for the benefit of the Orphans' Home. From Carson City she went to Reno where she gave a talk on "Judaism"; a reception was tendered in her honor by the city's Jewish citizens and their friends. When she was about to leave for home, she was called back to Carson City; the occasion was a reception given for her by the Governor. The affair was described as one of the great social events of the season. After a musical program Ray "made a charming little speech" in which she referred to her early life in Nevada as being a determining period in her life.

The Jewish Times and Observer of April 26, 1895, gave an account of how on the previous Sunday morning the young people of Beth Jacob Congregation who assembled as usual in the Sabbath School for religious and ethical instruction were taken by Miss Ray Frank to Berkeley,

and there under a calm blue sky in sight of trees and flowers, hills and ocean, with the birds above joyously singing approval, were given a never to be forgotten lesson. They were told of their history and ancestry. The Commandments, the creeds and the words of the prophets were indelibly impressed upon the minds of the listeners. The parti-colored garments of the children, as well as their young voices responding to the questions or singing the Jewish hymns, the sky for a canopy and the trees for walls attracted many strollers through the grounds. The visitors were deeply impressed and at the end of the lesson bestowed many encomiums upon what they termed a remarkable sight and a more remarkable sermon . . . Perhaps, [added the paper] at no time has Judaism been taught in a fresher way and more akin to the work of the prophets than it was last Sunday morning.⁷⁶

On May 14th, Ray spoke at a meeting of the Alameda Union for Practical Progress (*Alameda Daily Argus*,

⁷⁶ RFLS, p. 123.

May 15, 1895) on a topic "Improved Home Life." She traced the evolution of social life in the pairing of sexes and turned to pages of history to prove that the home had been the making of virtues and the destroyer of vice. Referring to an almost universal discontent, she maintained that economy was an important element in home life. Luxury, she claimed, was eating away the life of the people. There was nothing the matter with the world physically, but there was much the matter with individuals."

On August 17th of the same year, Ray occupied the pulpit of Temple Emanuel in San Francisco; she not only preached the sermon but read the Scriptures having selected for her text the stanzas from the second chapter of *Nehemiah*: "We will go forth and build." The paper in describing the event, told that a visitor to the Temple would have supposed it to be a feast day or a holy day.

In her pretty gown, with her expressive dark face, she was a striking figure in the pulpit, outlined against the dark crimson and gold background, where so many rabbis stood before her but never a woman to take part in the regular services of the seventh day. She spoke without notes and the tones of her voice penetrated to the remotest corners of the synagogue.⁷⁹

She contended that

the Messiah of the Jew has ever been with him and always awaits recognition . . . Only when the Jew shall go back to the beginning of his history, both as a priest and a scientist, will he understand the full significance of his history, or how near he has ever been to the Messiah and what has been the object of his dispersion . . .

The mission of the Jew, is to become the international arbi-

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 124.

⁷⁸ San Francisco Chronicle, Aug. 18, 1895 [LC].

⁷⁹ RFLS, p. 134.

trator among men . . . Nothing but an experience such as his could get a human being to become a universal arbitrator. In order to accomplish his mission it is incumbent upon him that he through the knowledge of his past select only that which will make him individually and collectively the embodiment of highest moral ideas . . . [Then] will he be sought for as the balance which will adjust the affairs of men. War will not cease in the world as long as contending elements exist, but contending powers may be so adjusted as to give peace to the world . . . We will all be brethren when we all believe. There will be universal brotherhood when there is universal belief. . . . Jerusalem stood for justice. She has fallen but she is not dead. It remains with the Jew to resuscitate her and once more give the world a living, loving judge. This is the mission of the Jew. 80

The *Chronicle* added:

Miss Frank's enthusiasm is of a contagious sort and before she had finished her words were dropping like sparks into the souls of aroused people before her.⁸¹

In August, 1895, the synagogue of Tifferes Israel Congregation was dedicated to Jewish worship in San Francisco in a building formerly occupied by St. Paul's German Lutheran Church. Rabbi Jacob Nieto and Ray Frank were invited to attend. Both advocated strongly a union of small orthodox congregations, which because of too much individuality among the brethren, could not affiliate harmoniously. The dedication was a memorable event "with two stalwart policemen keeping away the intruders and babies and small children on the inside frequently interrupting the proceedings." In appreciation of Ray's address the Congregation presented her with a set of resolutions which read in part:

Resolved: That as at the miraculous crossing of Red Sea

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

our ancestors hailed with joy and delight the song and music of Miriam, this Congregation with equal delight and joy hailed the presence of Miss Rachel Frank and the music of her sweet speech.

Resolved: That like unto the love that Israel bore to the venerated Miriam, the Debora and other distinguished of their compeers, we hail with becoming reverence our loved and distinguished Miss Frank.

Resolved: That in the ability and learning of Miss Frank, in her readiness to respond to Israel's call, the Israelites of the United States should feel the greatest pride. It shall be the fond prayer to the God of our fathers to spare her to Israel.⁸²

In the autumn of the same year she officiated during the High Holy Days in Victoria, British Columbia, in an Orthodox Congregation of that city. The officers presented her with a scroll in which they expressed their admiration for "her masterly eloquence and learning, for great and holy work." The scroll concluded with the wish:

May the Eternal strengthen you to perform your mission unto Israel! May He establish the work of your hands and may you be permitted to lay the foundation of a structure imperishable in its parts to the ravages of time—an ornament to the builder—dedicated to the most High—the God of Israel! Amen.

In an article entitled "The Arch Enemy of the Jew" which appeared in *The Jewish Times and Observer* of November 15, 1895, she denounced the renegade Jew as such an enemy. After quoting Benjamin Disraeli who when taunted in Parliament for being a Jew, replied:

Yes, I am a Jew, but let me remind the honorable gentleman that when his ancestors were naked savages on the banks of the Thames, mine were priests in Solomon's Temple,

⁸² LC.

Ray proceeded to extol pride of ancestry, loyalty to country, to home as the highest characteristics of man.

Patriotism has formed the theme of innumerable great poems, and next to love no sentiment has so stirred the human heart, has so quickened the soul as has an appeal to one's ancestral pride.

She considered

it as a grim sort of humor to read in the press dispatches that the Anti-Semitic party, headed by [Hermann] Ahlwardt and [Adolf] Stoecker was striving to debar all Jews, including those who as far back as three or four generations had a Jewish ancestor, from the rights and privileges of other German subjects.

Reminding one that no country was in possession of as many Jews who have become proselytes to Christianity as Germany, she spoke of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob being brought face to face with the fact that once a Jew always a Jew—not necessarily a good Jew, not necessarily a bad one—but always a Jew.

Is there anything [she asks] more profoundly pathetic, more grimly humorous, more piteously contemptible than he who denies his father and is in turn rejected because he avows he is not that which he is?

Oh, shame upon shame on him who for an instant forgets the mighty struggle of Israel, who forgets the sufferings and the wanderings of his people, who forgets the hunger and the cold, the dungeon and burning fagot, the tortures of the Inquisition, who forgets the most marvelous history, the grandest ideals, all of which has been and is, to prove our worth. . . . For over three thousand years, Israel has been engaged in a struggle for universal freedom, a struggle which is without parallel in history. For almost nineteen hundred years, the body of historic Judaism has been rent and torn. Only its God-given spirit has remained changeless; still blessing us with purity and peace, encouraging us with lofty ideals, due to those who have counted no sacrifice too great to retain our

ancient faith. Bound together by ties of religion and suffering, hoping for each other, we must regard as renegade one who forgets his past and present obligations to Judaism. Of the sincere convert from any one creed to another I am not speaking... I criticize only the descendant of Jacob who for no other reason but a sordid ambition, is ashamed of, deserts, aye, hates his own people. It is a singular fact, but nevertheless a fact that some of the worst persecutors of a people have come from within its own ranks.

Some of Ray's efforts were directed in 1895 towards the establishment in Oakland of a branch of the National Council of Jewish Women. There seemed to have developed some opposition to the realization of the project. *The Jewish Times* of August 30, 1895, took cognizance of the "cold water" which some people were trying to put on the laudable efforts of Ray and wrote:

if it could only be inculcated into the diminutive brains of some of these chronic croakers that it is Miss Frank's unselfish heart's desire to elevate them. The elevation of our race by the talented leader among Jewish women of the present day may be a soulful undertaking, but taken in a practical way it is undoubtedly a thankless and heartbreaking task.⁸³

Ray envisaged the Council branch as

bringing about a closer fellowship, a greater unity of thought and purpose among Jewish women, as furthering the best and highest interests of humanity in religious, philanthropic and educational fields.⁸⁴

To quote her:

As soon as we are organized we shall take up the study of Jewish history, we shall attempt to arouse in the Jewish women intelligent interest in the history, the religion, the philosophy, the poetry of Judaism. Judaism! heroic struggle for liberty of conscience and all its advance, can not fail to

⁸³ RFLS, p. 130.

⁸⁴ The Jewish Progress (San Francisco), Aug. 16, 1895 [RFLS, p. 130].

inspire those who study it right. Tolerance, a broad humanity, a love for all, will suffice those who catch the spirit which chastened Judaism through the sad ages of persecution.⁸⁵

There was a large attendance at the Ladies' Auxiliary of the First Hebrew Congregation when Ray explained the objects of the National Council and the methods to be adopted for the realization of its aims. In most eloquent terms she appealed to the women for interest in a matter which, as she said, would revivify the fainting synagogal body. In terms "pointed and powerful" she painted a picture of Jewish woman's lack of interest in what she called "the essence of her existence" and exhorted her listeners to rouse themselves for their children and Judaism. According to newspaper accounts much enthusiasm was manifested for the project and many of those present signified their desire to join the organization.

On January 19, 1896, Ray spoke in the Stanford University Chapel on "The Moral Law in Nature"—she spoke of the underlying principle which unifies animate and inanimate nature: man, beast, bird and tree.

Unless one looked deeply into nature, one could not discern the all-pervading obedience to a universal guiding will.⁸⁶

In the self-same manner as we speak of nature obeying its law, man was to be an obedient servant of that law—to endeavor to guide his life so that it should run parallel to it. The only way was by an abandonment of self and by leading a life of moral self-sacrifice.

The eloquent and noble words of Miss Frank were beautifully closed by the recitation of a poem which tells that though

⁸⁵ RFLS, p. 130.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 137.

duty or obedience is a severe taskmaster it is the only true one.87

In view of the reversal of Ray's original position and her assistance in organizing the League of Women Voters in Champaign-Urbana, it is of interest to note what were the arguments advanced by her in 1895 when she took a stand against the granting of suffrage to women. She contended that

if woman has been under the control of man as to be dominated by him, as the suffragists claim, then she is not in the proper frame of mental development to go into politics and assist in the control of the nation. She ought to begin a preparatory course.

She argued that there was a more useful field for women than direct participation in politics.

That field was the home, a field that the woman of today is not cultivating to the extent that is possible.

The suffragists have told us that woman is compelled to cook, wash and clean house because it is dirty work, drudgery, and something that men would not do. This work is not

a whit harder than the work men do, mining, bricklaying, teaming, farming and the like.

The contention of the suffragists that women are denied opportunities which men have she dismissed by asserting that there was no profession in the land that women cannot and do not enter. And then she added:

Yes, there is one—but that is of a character which most of the suffragists shun—the profession of a trained mother.⁸⁸

To quote from a contemporary account:

⁸⁷ Ibid. (Emanuel, Jan. 31, 1896).

⁸⁸ RFLS, p. 127.

Speaking with a depth of earnestness that is almost apostolic, her words flowing with a dull, constant heat, her searching, comprehensive mind never losing itself in verbiage, never becoming mere intelligence—she is always animated by a rich human sympathy.⁸⁹

In the interview she declared:

My work is directed chiefly to the Jewish woman, who, through all the ages, has been the great homebuilder, the foundation of the family. Will she now, at this late date, when her intellectual development is more than ever an equal with that of men, forsake her old duties, her old high calling, which she has fulfilled so long and so nobly. Women are beginning to forget how all-important the home and the family are. They must be brought back and taught to see that every innovation, every change is not progress. They must take their intellectual life first into their homes, afterward into the streets. 90

It was the irresponsible way in which the advocates of women's suffrage were carrying on their campaign where "loud speaking was a substitute for calm and judicious discussion" that set Ray against the movement.

If college-bred women with a philosophical grasp of mind should take it up it might be a different thing.

Many of the women, now advocating suffrage

are silly and volatile; at best they know their side of the story and nothing more. They are not willing, they have not the capacity to look fairly at the other side of the question.

In an address whose theme was "The Jewish Woman and Suffrage" Ray dwelt on the home making and home keeping qualities of the Jew. She argued

that the state and the nation were abstract terms, having value only when they represent homes; that the evils existing

⁸⁹ San Francisco Bulletin, Nov. 15, 1895 [LC].

⁹⁰ Ibid.

in society were as largely due to woman's extravagance, to her ignorance, to her prejudice, social and theological, to her false conception of marriage, as to man's moral depravity; that no woman need await the privilege of a ballot in order to commence reform, that she must give evidence of ability to put in order her own house before she can be entrusted with the affairs of a nation.⁹¹

She spoke of motherhood as the culmination of womanhood and said that the progress of a race was dependent on its women. She dwelt on the physiological and social laws as put down by Moses in *Leviticus*. Eloquently, touchingly, for there were tears in many eyes, she spoke of the sacred duties of motherhood which were not to be attained or preserved by the ballot but which today await the one who understands the real mission of the woman.

Consistent with her opposition to the granting of woman suffrage, Ray withdrew from the program of the Woman's Congress held in 1895 when the political nature of that body became evident. Ray's disagreement with the woman suffragists elicited the following remarks from Ambrose Bierce:

That the unspeakable woman suffragers should be sufficiently obstreperous and uproarious to take Miss Frank's attention from more profitable matters is to be regretted; but if it must be that their reclamation is to be attempted by kind words and gentle means, we may justly be thankful for her to speak the words and use the means. The attempt is doomed to failure, but when made by her it has an intrinsic value as an entertainment. I have found that when this daughter of light and fire opens her lips to speak, I forget the subject of the discourse in the charming personality of the speaker. And that, I take is no small advantage when the subject is the New Woman. Anything that will give the auditory nerve and its connections surcease of this odious creature, is

⁹¹ RFLS, p. 127.

worth going a long way to hear, and if Miss Frank, by talking of her, can make us forget her, Miss Frank is worthy of the favor of "whatever gods may be." ⁹²

Ray was a peacemaker. A controversy flared up in the spring of 1897 after Ray succeeded in healing the breach amongst the members of the Hebrew Congregation in Stockton. All seemed harmonious until a communication appeared in the paper stating that Dr. M. S. Jaffe, the President of the Congregation, was trying to get Miss Frank to become the synagogue's rabbi.93 Some members opposed the move on the ground that a woman rabbi was in opposition to Mosaic law. As in every other case, when the question of rabbinate was brought up, Ray informed the interested parties that she was not a candidate, and that she had no intention of occupying any pulpit permanently. To the best of my knowledge, at no time was there a question involved of ordaining her as a regular rabbi. What a number of congregations were after was to enlist her services as their preacher and counselor, as the director of their Sabbath schools. Her declining such offers was prompted by her unwillingness to be bound by obligations, expressed or implied, to a governing board of trustees, paying her a salary for her services. She wanted to be free to teach and to preach, to lecture and to write the best way she knew how for the benefit of her people whenever the occasion demanded it.

With its October 21, 1898 issue the *American Hebrew* established a department dealing with "Zion and Zionism." The first contributing article in this department

⁹² San Francisco Examiner, Nov. 18, 1895 [LC].

⁹³ RFLS, pp. 142-144.

was one by Ray.⁹⁴ It described the Zionist meeting which was held in London, and at which Herzl made his first appearance in England. There was a crowd of about seven thousand people to greet him.

He came, he spoke and he conquered, at least to the extent of an immense audience, an enthusiastic audience, an earnest determined audience.

Ray's attitude towards Zionism at that time was that of skepticism with regard to theories which, as she has put it,

would in a day build from a heterogenous mass of human blocks, an edifice that shall forever withstand the conflicting forces of internal and external elements.

However, she was heartened by the fact that the Jew has recognized at last the necessity of unity, of solidarity, that he has awakened to the duty of studying his case, of taking his own medicine, of showing determination to be cured. Being on the rostrum she could see

thousands, thousands, sitting close together, backs curved both by labor and expectancy; heads inclined toward the spot, the holy spot whereon Joshua—Herzl will stand; arms mostly folded across flattened chests, as if to keep down the excitement that leaps within their century old bodies . . . All about is a strange murmur as if the Red Sea is nearby and a miracle is about to happen. And it does happen! The human waves cease to heave; there is an instant stillness in the air, then the vast sea of faces advances, recedes, suddenly rises billow-like, and the audience is on its feet, waving its arms and shouting: "Herzl, Herzl!" And is it a dream, a hallucination born of this madly joyous scene that I fancy that I see "Pharaoh's horses and his chariots cast into the sea?" In appearance, Herzl is not only handsome, but royal—tall,

Ray Frank, "A Zionist Meeting in London," *American Hebrew*, vol. LXIII, no. 25, whole no. 988 (Oct. 21, 1898), pp. 739-740. The excerpts cited herein are from that publication (tearsheets, LC).

broad-shouldered, with finely shaped head and features. Dark-haired and eagle-eyed, he reminds one of the heroes of Eastern romances . . . Whether or not one agrees with him, he impresses one as a man who believes in himself, in his mission.

There was one address that interested Ray more than any others, it was the one delivered by "angel-faced" Rabbi Abraham Werner, has a who received as great an ovation from the audience as Herzl himself. Rabbi Werner was the head of the secession wing from Dr. Hermann Adler's flock; an ultra-orthodox faction of the Chief Rabbi's following had chosen Werner to lead them.

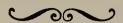
A man evidently past the three score and ten limit, somewhat below the average height, yet scarcely bowed by his years . . . it is his face that attracts, holds one spellbound by its sweetness, its almost seraphic look. His pale, regular features, his large, mild blue eyes and his beautiful silvery hair, together with the expression of patience and nobility, impress one with the holiness which is born of sublime faith ... Rabbi Werner spoke in Yiddish, and coming from him it was a perfect language, liquid, tremulous, and so musical that the thousands whose mother tongue it was, sat hypnotized into ecstasy [sic!] by the hope in the words they knew and felt, by the rapt look of the prophet who spoke. Yes, these ghetto children feel! See how they clasp their hands, mutter responses, utter prayers, then break into wild cheers! Now the old Rabbi raises his hands in blessing, and wiping my eyes I again survey the sea of faces. Such pallid skins, such patient lines around the mouths, now muttering "Amen! Amen!" Homeless you have been, here is a respite! How long, O, how long? The Rabbi says: "The days of weeping are ended," and you shout for joy: you laugh and throw your old caps into the air, you are free! God grant it. I am sad. I fear this is a dream, this joyous shouting. But dreaming or waking, I am one of you . . . I know I am dreaming and the mad applause for an Anglican priest-who and where from, I do not

See Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. XII, p. 502; Young Israel (London), vol. III (1899-1900), p. 45.

know—is awakening me. I know that fervently as I desire that the homeless may return to Palestine, prayerfully as I seek some light from the Zionistic shores, I hear but the beating of an unknown sea, freighted with thousands of helpless craft. God, grant they may escape the rocks! But oh, what an awful calamity it is when a whole People awakens from a Dream!⁹⁵

Thus ends what the editor described as a brilliant essay. Well, the dream has come true, but only after six million of European Jewry fell victims to the maniacal fury of Hitler and his cohorts!

"Full of triumphant tragedy and deep philosophy...."



Due to the illness of her older married sister, Mrs. Aaron Berg, Ray was looking after the latter's children and while their affection for her cooled off considerably as they grew older, it is manifest in the letters which they wrote to her between 1886 and 1890 that they loved her and missed her very much. Ray preserved some of these letters, from which I am taking the liberty to quote:

Dear darling aunty Ray, [wrote Ruth,] When are you coming back. I am terribly lonesome . . . I picked out two handkerchiefs with pictures of dishes on for Gertie's birthday. Million kisses. I want you to come down again. Send me a kiss. What are you agoing to bring me when you come down. I guess you wouldn't like to be down here in such a hot weather. The sweat is just pouring from me . . . I send a kiss, dear loving auntie. It is so hot. I wish you were here very much indeed. We got a tom cat. Willie found it. He put the front paws in a sack. I have got my ring . . . Write soon to Your Darling Ruthie. 96

⁵⁵ This article was written by her in London, Oct. 3, 1898.

⁹⁶ Ruth Berg, later Mrs. Murray Longhurst.

In another letter Ruthie wrote:

Please, Aunty Ray you said you were going to come down. You are a sweet-heart. We have given away our little kitty. Why don't you come down . . . Dear Aunty, a little bird came in our yard with a broken foot. It is a linnet. We are doctoring it in a cage. When it is well we will let it go because I belong to the band of Mercy. My ball was on the house and Willie got it down. Dear Aunty Ray, I love you. I do like you, my sugar plum. Dear Aunty Ray when are you going to come down. I do like my loving precious ever so much . . . Dear Aunty Ray, do you like me very much. Write me a little letter soon on green paper. Come down soon. Tell some of the little children that I remember them . . . I'll give you a big hug.

On August 2, 1889, Gertrude [Berg] wrote from Sacramento:

Dear Aunty, I thought I would write to you as I feel so lonesome. Ruth has been asleep or crying for you all day. She said she was so lonesome. She is asleep now. She says she wishes she got you or you would send for us, and I wish the same. I feel as if I would cry all the time for you. When is Aunty Ess going to Irvington? Ruth might write if she wakes up in time . . . I hope you feel well. Please excuse my mistakes. With love and kisses.

In another letter, from Woodland, California, to the dear beloved Aunty, "darling Gertie" wrote:

I received your letter and it made me feel so happy to hear from you that I cried. I like it here but I keep wishing all the time that you were all here . . . I wish I could go out walking with you. I often feel sorry to think that I was ever naughty. I wish I could see our dear Willie and sweet little Ruth. I keep thinking about grandma all the time and remember everything she told me. I do not eat meat and milk together . . . I always say my prayers and try to be a good girl. School commences here in three weeks and then Florence is going to take me to school . . . Papa sometimes brings me some soda and I wish you could have some of it. Wednesday I went to

the soda factory and papa said that he would show me a canary bird, but it was a frog. I knew it was because I had seen picture frogs. Much love, many kisses and many hugs.

To quote from another of Gertrude's letters written in 1890:

As I have been lonesome for you I thought it would make me feel as if I were talking to you if I wrote you a letter. I am sorry the trip was so rough and that you were not well, but I guess that you will feel much better after awhile. Ruth talks to me about you and wishes that she could see you... I say my prayers for you every night and pray that you will get well. I hope you have a nice time. Please write to me . . . With much love and many kisses.

The cooling off process towards Ray when the children grew up may be explained, it seems to me, by the fact that as Ray had become more and more of a public figure and as the demands upon her time became more and more pressing, her attitude towards the children became more strict. She was not as patient with them as she was heretofore; she wanted them to conform to what she considered should be their standards of behavior and they began to think of her as domineering. When the question arose in 1898 of her going to Europe the idea found a responsive chord in the family. Ray wanted to go. Her head full of praises bestowed upon her, with a feeling of satisfaction concerning what she had accomplished, but also with a certain weariness in body and soul, she wanted to go in order to escape temporarily from her activities in the West, also perhaps from some of the annoyances of her home life. She looked forward to visiting the countries of Western Europe, with their museums, their art galleries, their theatres, and their universities; she wanted to spend some time in studying what she described as philosophy of art.

On her way to Europe she stopped in New York where she met Jacob H. Schiff, Oscar S. Straus and some other Jewish leaders as well as a number of editors and publishers. She stayed long enough to learn that busy, factual New Yorkers differed from the people she learned to know on the Pacific Coast. She told me that Oscar S. Straus after having listened long and patiently to what she had to say finally asked her: "But what is it really that you want to do?" This sums up the reactions of a realistic Easterner to the visionary from the West.

Apparently while in New York Ray thought of doing some journalistic work. On April 11, 1898, Mrs. Leon [Bertha G.] Sloss wrote to her:

Mr. Sloss hopes to have a letter from Mr. Tom Williams to Mr. [William Randolph] Hearst. He will write himself to Mr. Ned Townsend and Ed Hamilton . . . I have spoken to Dr. DeVecchi and amongst other suggestions he mentioned a letter to Mr. Raoul Martinez who is on the "World" and stands in favor with Mr. [Joseph] Pulitzer . . . Mrs. Jesse Lilienthal offers a letter to Mr. Schiff and Mr. DeWitt Seligman, both influential men and friends of Mr. Pulitzer.

She was provided also with a letter of introduction from Bierce to Chamberlain which read:

I have the pleasure to present you to Miss Ray Frank of whom you already know. I hope Miss Frank will find you sufficiently worthy to aid her in any way she may require there and in London.⁹⁷

Ray's ideas of what should be the proper field for a woman reporter were not in accord with the standards set by New York editors; she was told by one of them that there were no ladies and no gentlemen in reportorial work, that each had to do what was assigned to him or to her, whether it was the reporting of a fashionable

on This letter was written in Los Gatos, Calif., May 11, 1898.

wedding, of a free-for-all fight in a saloon, or of a murder case on the water front. Reporters had to go where they were sent. This did not coincide with what Ray thought about the matter, and so there was no place for her as a reporter, not on the New York papers anyhow.

During her stay in London, Ray met a number of outstanding personalities in the religious, literary and social life of the British Jewry.

My dear Ray Frank, [wrote Mrs. Leon Sloss from San Francisco (December 27, 1898)] what I am about to ask, you may consider an impertinent question, but in spite of all qualifications, fascinating personality and charm what particular letters introduced you to austere England's inner circles? I can understand their interest and love for you after once knowing you but for the first step strong influences must have been brought to bear.

The inner circle into which Ray was admitted included Lady and the Misses Montagu, Lady Katie Magnus, Mrs. Felix Moscheles, Mrs. Rachel Simon, ^{97a} the Davis family and the family of the Chief Rabbi of England, Dr. Hermann Adler. Nettie Adler, the talented, indefatigable social worker, became one of Ray's warm friends. On July 1, 1900, she wrote to her:

I wonder whether you will smile and think I am "priggish" if I say, that you would hardly realize what it means to me when the little children of East End run after me and cling to my hands or dress. It is really a shame to bother you with uninteresting bits of personal psychology, but your great sympathy which seems to look into the very heart of things prompts me to write to you to thank you for having given me so much of yourself today.

On December 25th of the same year when Ray was

Simon," in Young Israel, vol. II (London, 1899), pp. 224-226.

in Zurich, Miss Adler wrote that she has been working hard at

School Board things canvassing for one of the Progressive candidates, then making up arrears neglected for the purpose. I have been a machine and not very human, hence I hesitated to approach *you*, most human and sympathetic of souls!

Apparently Miss Adler felt that her ideas would find a responsive chord in Ray; her letters reveal the sensitive, imaginative side of her nature.

I often think, [she continued,] that it is one of the saddest aspects of life that each human being knows so little of each fellow human soul. We are so fearful of wearing our hearts on our sleeves that more often than not we bury them under so many strata of conventions that whenever they are produced for the benefit of some kind of sympathetic friend, the heart appears as a fossil out of a miocene deposit.

In anticipation of Ray's return to London she wrote:

When you come home (I write "home" for we regard you as an adopted English woman for the time being) we must really have a good time together.

A lasting friendship developed between Ray and the lovely, gifted interpreter of Jewish lore, Nina Ruth Davis (later Mrs. Redcliffe Salaman). After Ray left London they exchanged letters continuously, the correspondence having come to an end only with the death of Mrs. Salaman in 1925.

A pleasant time was spent by Ray in England, an England unscarred by two world wars, an England where the life of the middle and upper classes moved along serenely and where the so-called lower classes "knew their place," an England of large estates, luxurious mansions, week-end parties and servants galore. Ray told of an incident which occurred when she was

a guest of a well-to-do Jewish family; it was indicative of conditions as they existed at that time. A maid was assigned to minister to her needs. As an American, Ray was accustomed to doing many things for herself. On the second day following her arrival, the maid told her:

A few weeks ago we had a real lady as a guest, she always called me when there was anything to be done.

Crossing the British Channel Ray stopped in Frankfurt am Main where some of the relatives of her brother-in-law lived. She found German Jews quite different from the British Jewry whom she learned to know. Perhaps it was her inability to express herself fluently in the German language that prevented her from coming into closer contact with the Jewish people in Frankfurt and later in Munich. However, I think that the main reason was her lack of sympathy with what most of them, particularly the emancipated ones, stood for.

Speaking of contrast, she was quite surprised when invited to visit the Palm Garden in Frankfurt to discover that she was expected to pay her own admission fee. I had the taste of a similar experience a few years later. I was asked whether I would care to attend a musical show for which the party asking me had tickets. It turned out that the tickets entitled one to a somewhat lower admission fee; this I was privileged to pay for Ray, for myself and for the members of the family, whose guests we were.

However valuable may have been Ray's activities as a preacher and a journalist and whatever good she may have accomplished by her utterances from the pulpit and her contributions to the press, it is the lecture platform that gave her the greatest opportunity for the exercise of her talents. The press dwelt most enthusiastically on her ability to instruct and to charm her audiences. To quote from a review of her talk on the "Heart Throbs of Israel":

She has that something outside of mere fluency of speech, that indefinable power that stirs the sympathies of her listeners. She is not a mere speaker, a talker, but an orator in the highest significance of the term . . . If the critic goes into extravagant rhapsodies over a [Anton] Rubinstein, a [Rafael] Joseffy, or a [Vladimir] de Pachman, it calls for no apology if a due meed of praise be offered to the orator, who can steal into the most guarded recesses of the heart, and awaken new impulses, loftier aspirations, nobler sentiments and purer thoughts.⁹⁸

"Heart Throbs of Israel"



Ray began her career as a lecturer in 1892, in Sacramento, and it did not take long to have her fame spread far and wide. People flocked to listen as she talked on the "Heart Throbs of Israel," on "Moses," on "Music and Its Revelations," on "Nature as a Supreme Teacher" and other topics.⁹⁹

From Los Angeles in the South to Victoria in the North, to San Bernardino and San Jose, to Sacramento and Stockton, to San Francisco and Oakland, to Portland and Seattle, and pushing Eastward to Chicago and Cincinnati, her voice rang out clearly and compellingly as, in response to what she called her mission, she extolled the contributions of the early Hebrew poets, sages and prophets towards the ascertainment of eternal values, towards the glorification of truth, towards the establishment of justice. Conceiving Beauty as one of the manifestations of God on earth, she spoke on how He is revealed in the blade of grass and in the snow

⁹⁸ Clippings (LC).

For quotations from and reports of these lectures, see RFLS, pp. 74-85, 87, 91-93, 103, 129, 133, 137 and 140.

covered mountain peaks, in the paintings by Raphael and in the statues of Michael Angelo, in the Psalms of David and in the symphonies of Beethoven. "My great passion is for art," she averred in an interview, "because art includes everything. Everybody's story is in his art. The art of any nation is indicative of its whole life and thought."¹⁰⁰

These ideas of Ray's with regard to art were challenged by Israel Zangwill who apparently in response to a communication from her wrote (London, January 1, 1897):

Of course Art includes the whole of life, in the sense that anything can be treated artistically. But it does not include the whole of life, in the sense that everything is already artistic. The whole of life is merely raw material for art... The actual universe of literature includes much that is not art, e.g. scientific and philosophic works that address understanding... There is so much confusion about art that I find it necessary to limit the term to that portion of a complex whole which charms and vivifies one...

In the "Heart Throbs of Israel" she told her audiences that many years before the appearance of the works of Homer and Virgil, the Hebrews produced poets whose poetry was characterized by simplicity and depth of personal feeling. These Hebrew poets were seeking for something to lean on, for something outside and above them; they yearned for the highest, they prayed to heaven. In their poetry one can find

sublime thoughts, beautiful sentiments, sorrowful wails from broken hearts, all typical of the grand, soft and rugged scenery of the country in which they were born. The great part of their poetry was lyrical in nature, the product of

³⁰⁰ San Francisco Bulletin, Nov. 15, 1895 (LC).

their heart throbs—poems of exultation, of love and leth-argy.¹⁰¹

She scarcely touched upon the Golden Age of Jewish literature, which blossomed at the time when the Moors ruled in Spain, but devoted her time largely to Scriptural poets of whom she said,

high art might condemn for want of rhyme and meter, but who sought truth rather than form.

Take the Hebrew bard, David. Look at his psalms... We agree that the psalms bring comfort to the heart. One does not think of the author, but simply reads and is comforted. Why, because in the psalms is something beyond substance, something beyond human power, and His personality lives in them. Henry Ward Beecher said the first time he took notice of the twenty-third psalm he felt like one outside on the stormy night and suddenly a door was opened and inside he saw happy faces and almost heard a voice say: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." In these few lines is to be found that which comforted millions...

The thoughts and expressions of the great poets of English literature, Milton, Shakespeare and the rest, received their impulse and inspiration from the poets of Israel . . . From Paradise Lost turn to Genesis, from the Sonnets of Shakespeare to the songs of Solomon . . . Do you look for tragedy, you don't need to go to Hamlet. Take up the book of Job . . . All the philosophy of the melancholy Dane pales before that of Job and his councellors. 102

From the Psalms of David and the songs of Solomon she passed to the discussion of the book of Job

full of triumphant tragedy and deep philosophy, equal to anything to be found in Shakespeare.

To quote from the reviews of the address, she brought to life with skillful sympathetic treatment the sublime poetry to be found in many pages of the Bible,

¹⁰¹ RFLS, pp. 74–85.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 82.

poetry which has been neglected because people considered the Bible only as a digest of moral and religious laws [and because in] the past it has been fashionable to study Greek and Latin, to drink in the murky streams of mythology, instead of going to the fountainhead of spiritual values to be found in the Bible.

In a lecture on "Art and What it Means to Me" delivered before the Oakland Lodge of B'nai B'rith¹⁰³ and later before other groups, Ray referred to a farmer and his wife who at the Columbian Exposition were looking for the art gallery. When it was pointed out to them the old farmer exclaimed:

Why, what a plain building. It ain't half so fine as the Fisheries and Administration buildings. Yet it was conceded to be the finest building at the fair, because of its classic style, its grey simplicity, its fidelity to nature.

Passing to the exhibits in the building, Ray spoke of some of the groups of statuary. One, of the Vanderbilt family, attracted attention for its finesse of execution, yet it was not true art.

Mere finesse of carving is not the highest art. In a Venus of Milo was found the perfection of human form, [but she declared] there was a higher art than that of mere perfection of form or outline, the art which embodies an ideal.

Such a group was "Even So" representing a woman supporting her husband, who had been hit by a bullet, while at the same time directing his gun against the adversary. After a discussion at some length of the predominant tone of the paintings of several nations, the lecturer considered the effect of natural environment upon art. The speaker said that

Russia today gives the greatest promise in art. The high-

¹⁰³ Oakland Inquirer, Feb. 8, 1894 (RFLS, p. 106). The citations quoted herein are from this newspaper.

est form of art is the results of great struggles. The great artist must be a man of intense feeling, so full of sensibility that everything makes an impression on him . . . Struggles stirred the genius of Michael Angelo . . .

In our own times we have . . . a great prophet in Millet, who deals with the scenes of common life, with sunsets, fields and peasants . . . [Expressions of] true art may be found in depicting home scenes, the incidents by the wayside, a group of workmen. The spirit of helpfulness and humanity is the highest inspiration of the art of today. That art is the art of feeling with men, for men. It is not Grecian, nor Roman or German or English; it belongs to no nation, but to mankind.

A lecture on "The God Idea in Art" was first delivered and won much praise for the speaker in the East. 104 In it Ray traced the development of art from the early beginning, from the time when the making of idols was prevalent in Egypt, when Jews were captive there and when their art consisted in the cultivation of the art of living and later, under the influence of Moses, in the evolving idea of one God. She passed in review the art of the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Romans, of the period of the Renaissance and of the modern schools of painting and sculpture. She claimed that prosperity does not bring out great artists.

They are born through trial and adversity. Artists can only express what they feel. Tranquility of soul does not inspire great pictures . . . There have been multitudinous definitions of art among different people and at different times. Usually it has been described as the good or the beautiful.

Ray defined it as "a man's adoration of God, just as science is man's verification of God." It was delivered before the San Francisco Sketch Club to "a crowd of absorbed listeners," mostly artists and those interested

¹⁰⁴ San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 24, 1894 (RFLS, p. 112).

in art. The San Francisco Chronicle called the talk scholarly and breathing idealistic philosophy.

Other addresses given by Ray upon her return to California in 1894 included one given under the sponsorship of the Young Women's Club of San Francisco on "Thought and Its Origin and Development," another before a session at the Pacific Theological Seminary on "Hebrew Charities."

In May of that year there was held in San Francisco the Woman's Congress, considered by some as the most important of the various intellectual gatherings in connection with the California International Exposition. On May 6th, Ray spoke at one of the sessions of this Congress having selected as her topic "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow Relative to Religion." In this address, which was published in *The Jewish Times and Observer* on May 25, 1894, and the excerpts from which appeared earlier in the San Francisco papers, Ray contended that religion came with man, as the natural function of the human soul, as the Heaven's greatest blessing. 106

In the rude carvings of India, China and Egypt, in the idols of Canaanitish tribes, in all these in accordance with their intellectual nature, were shown the elements of religion; but its full meaning, its object and attainment were hidden.

Then as now humanity looked towards heaven. Once it wanted to build a tower in order to reach God "not so was He to be reached." Ray proceeded to trace the development of religion through the centuries from the days of the Hebrew patriarchs to the birth of Christ—Monotheism came with Moses and with him came also

¹⁰⁵ Oakland Inquirer, May 1, 1894 (RFLS, p. 108).

¹⁰⁶ RFLS, pp. 116-118. The quotations from this address that follow are taken from this source.

the Ten Commandments as the basis of Man's advancement. Then

came one of meek and lowly spirit whose life was full of beautiful practices, who came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it, who came to impress upon the people that the law must be lived. Jesus of Nazareth taught what the prophet Micah long before him had said: Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God.

Soon the Golden Rule gave way to theological tyranny. The light of Sinai was shown from Olivet, but "men used its fires to burn one another." A civilization based upon art, science and philosophy arose, product of Greece and Rome; they set up beauty, physical beauty as the God of men, and so long did they gaze upon this idol that they lost their vision; Greece and Rome had themselves to blame for the ashes which buried them.

A dogmatic priesthood came on the scene and big bonfires with so-called heretics as fagots blackened for centuries with sickening smoke the clear sky of "love mercy." As the next step the Reformation and the Renaissance sent their rays into the furthermost thoughts of men. It was recognized that "dogmatism was not theology and theology was not religion." Though the centuries between the Reformation and the dawn of our own era were yet full of fanaticism of dreadful blunders, the truth became known and its realization was spreading.

It became known that example is better than precept and that to be a humane man is infinitely better than to be an inhuman theologian.

Science was unfolding her marvelous powers.

Nought so big and nought so little, nought so high and nought so low, but science fixes upon it her sharp eyes, and

before her clear penetrating look good and bad, all that is of earth is revealed.

In our attitude toward science we are devout. She has performed amazing miracles.

But have we not forgotten, are we not ungrateful to that which made science possible? The fact that man is something more than mechanism? That the highest utility of that mechanism is the reverent acknowledgment of and faith in God who made it? Have we not forgotten that Religion, a harmonious union of all the forces, including the wise and wondrous science herself, transcends in her utility all else?

After quoting Professor Joseph LeConte who wrote that "there is an evil spirit of science as well as a good spirit of science" and that "there are two kinds of utility, a lower and a higher, a lower which contributes to our material life, and a higher which contributes to our intellectual, moral and spiritual life" and that "the chief glory of science is her capacity to contribute to our higher nature." Ray states that

With the increase of numberless inventions to serve our sensual nature, we have well nigh forgotten that the body is corporeal and the soul incorporeal, that one is for the day and the other for eternity; that it is highly practical, absolutely essential that we recognize the importance of the higher utility; that we distinguish between the good and the evil spirit [of science]; that we strive to establish harmony between ourselves as matter and spirit . . . If from no higher than a selfish point of view [we should strive] to establish justice between men and men.

She cites as an example the United States, the embodiment of high material advancement, of high living and greed for more luxury, but whose mood is neither healthy nor happy. There are too many needy in the land who accuse the rich of extravagance and injustice

and who in turn are accused of shiftlessness and ingratitude.

Face to face they stand, confronting each other, each accusing, each demanding. Neither pays heed to the voice within and the spirits without whispering, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul." "Listen unto me, my people, and oh my nation, give ear unto me, for a law shall proceed from me, and my justice will I establish as a light of the people." 107

In the latter part of 1895 Ray delivered a number of Tuesday afternoon lectures under the patronage of prominent society people of San Francisco. The first of these dealt with "Jewish Women in Fact and History." "Miss Frank" wrote a reviewer "is certainly brilliant and has a philosophical mind." In the same year she spoke on "The Art of the Nations" in a synagogue in Victoria; it was heard with rapt attention. A Victoria paper described her as

a keen and analytical observer, a charming conversationalist and the possessor of a rare fund of humor as well as general information.¹⁰⁹

In a review of Ray's address¹¹⁰ on "Moses" the writer, Anna Cox Stephens, tells us that

Miss Ray Frank's lecture at the beautiful residence of Mrs. Schwabacher, was something more than a society occasion. It was an event intellectual and should mark its own red letter in the enthusiastic appreciation of the audience. Miss Frank's subject was Moses, the very intimation of choice, the suggestion of its possibilities in discerning the significant greatness, alone placed the lecturer on the pinnacle of her power. She swept past the centuries unto that

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁰⁹ Colonist, Sept. 24, 1895 (LC).

¹¹⁰ Emanuel, April 3, 1896 (LC).

mighty day that gave to the world the Law-giver, whose strong hand has from that momentous hour held aloft, above the conscience of humanity the edicts of eternal justice, defining the way for the world in words of fire—the Thou shalt not . . . Moses was revealed strong with the tablets of the Law; mighty as the leader of the Israelites in their exodus, great too as a philosopher and physician; forever and henceforth, the man of all ages, the man who felt upon him the great breath of the Eternal who sent him . . . Miss Frank has that uplifting eloquence which bears her audience into the presence of her subject, her glowing words are its richest coloring, her treatment incise and clear. The masterstroke of the sculptor, the painter's finest touch of light and shade, and behold, we see Moses of the Law before us in all the grandeur of Biblical setting . . . Her Moses had made his Omnipotent voice heard from his enthronement on the heights of Sinai. She followed him to that "grandest funeral seen on earth" and gathered her breathless audience about her as she stood at the later day on 'the spot where no man trod' by "that lovely tomb of Nebo."

Anna Cox Stephens thus concluded her review:

What Hypatia was to Rome, she is in a higher way and in a loftier religion is to us. There is an exaltation of mood in Miss Frank's eloquence that of itself places her in the highest place and like the Silent Sculptor, the thought which informs her, the mental attitude and the spirituality which is the fibre of her being, are the essentials from which she creates.

In an address before the Women's Congress on the "Main Strength of the Species" Ray spoke of morality as of divine origin and of the fact that whether we will or not we are influenced by the law.

That races of men less gifted, less noble than ourselves, have lived in the past is not to be doubted. But among the most primitive and savage races there was a something that held them together, gathering them into tribes and nations.

¹¹¹ San Francisco Chronicle, May 3, 1897 (LC).

And no one with all his acquired scientific knowledge will deny that there is something beyond the power of man that controls his sense of morality . . . In the recent discussion before the congress no one subject has been presented which has not given a certain amount of thought to the moral side of the subject. If the education of man can be approached on no side without touching this all pervading something then I think it may be said that morality is the mainstay of the species . . .

[With our system of common schools] we are striving to make of this nation the strongest nation that is to be but we are forgetting one important thing. The main thought of the people is to crowd as much of actual knowledge into the mind of the child as possible. That we may have the best system of schools we must not forget that knowledge is but a stepping stone to something higher and better . . . Mothers have come to me and asked what is to come of all this study . . . parents scarcely know their children because so much of their time is taken up in the classroom and so much of their time out of school has to be donated to study. Everything is being taught, but there is one thing that is not taught.

Filial obedience, reverence of father and mother; acknowledgment and respect of the law should be part of the life of today. Law in its aspects is changing, but it remains law. Had Moses never been given the tablets of stone on which were written the commandments, the truth would still have been revealed. The law was there. It simply had to be written. Any system of education which neglects a thought to obedience and moral developments forgets its most important function.

Reviewing her talk on "Music and Its Revelations" the writer in the *Town Talk* of San Francisco tells us how this cultured, well-poised, magnetic young woman who spoke without notes, whose words came more and more fluently, whose gift of expression is marvelously clear and satisfactory, went from prettily told legends of the origin of music into a brief history of its prog-

ress and constantly growing power through the ages. The reviewer wondered

how in her young life she had found time to inform herself so well and so thoroughly along so many different lines.

Music, said Ray, exercised the most powerful influence in the world, particularly in the moral sense.

Music is the effort of a surcharged soul of humanity to free itself, by uttering God's great Amen.

In an address on "The Gift of the Gods" Ray defined beauty as such a gift.

You say a thing is beautiful, a palm, a lily, a splendid piece of architecture, a woman, all these things, if called upon to define, give a confused sense of beauty... We leave home to find what is right at our door step. We always look for the beautiful as something beyond, but the beautiful is around and within. Touch the blade of grass and you are touching that upon which rest the feet of the God Almighty... Beauty is eternal.¹¹²

In her account of the address, Kate E. Brown stated that

more than one woman in the room if asked to define beauty, beauty of mind and character, beauty of purity and earnest purpose, beauty of soul and love of the beautiful would have honestly answered Ray Frank.¹¹³

Earlier, when Ray had spoken at the Chautauqua in Gladstone Park, Portland, Oregon, in July, 1897, there was a day dedicated in her honor. She was introduced to an audience of about seven thousand by the poet, Joaquin Miller. Her afternoon address was on "Nature—the Supreme Teacher." In it she discussed the universally held misconceptions of nature and pictured

¹¹³ LC.

¹¹³ Town Talk (San Francisco), Jan., 1898 [LC].

the intellectual, the esthetic happiness experienced by those who have the genius of penetrating beyond those aspects of nature popularly noted . . . Nature, [she contended,] must be blind to the individual as otherwise it could not be just to the whole. She is blind to the fraction, but bears with watchful and never failing eye upon the unit, which is the whole universe . . . Men viewing nature only in her utilitarian moods are blind to her nobler aspects. That a stream can turn a mill wheel is not of so much importance as that its beauties inspire the life of man to nobler things. There is a vast difference between looking and seeing. The blind look with their eyes but see not. And there is a mental blindness which prevents many from seeing all there is to be seen before their undimmed eyes. To him that inclines his ear to the earth to catch the harmony of nature, to him who looks at the mountains reverently, to him who looks all nature in the face with thoughtfulness and tenderness, to him it will prove an actual revelation of what is, what was and what shall be.114

Ray spoke again in the evening, having selected as her topic "The God Idea in Art." 115

In her lecture on "Jewish Folk Lore," Ray gave a lucid interpretation of those myths and legends that have for centuries demanded the attention and in many instances awakened the awe and superstitious credence of Occidental as well as Oriental nations. Introducing her remarks by drawing attention to the difference between the myth which is entirely fabulous and the legend, which rests on some fact embellished and clothed in the brilliant colorings in which imagination delights to revel, she went on to say that among the Jewish people there were a few myths and those all

¹¹⁴ LC.

¹¹⁵ Chautauqua News (Oregon City), July 21, 1897 [LC].

¹¹⁸ San Francisco, Jan. 28, 1898 (LC).

grew out of the one grand basic "Schemiel myth"117 which gave expression to all the myths incorporated in the folk lore of the Semitic race and from which sprung the myth literature which enriched the world. The flying clouds bringing the long looked for water to freshen the thirsty earth and the flash of serpentine fire, the lightning of the storm became, to the heaven-gazing untutored races of the earth, a flying bird from whose beak a worm of fire was dropped, Environment naturally graded and shaded these mythical fancies. In Greece they became euphonistic, poetic, delicate in color and objective. With the Norsemen they were rugged. In them man was deified and the gods became like unto him and vices became ennobled in them. Jewish folklore was always subjective. Man was clothed with attributes of God. The tendency was ever monotheistic, shaping itself toward the unity of God.

The speaker touched upon the wealth of legend in the Talmud from which Shakespeare, Browning, Washington Irving, Longfellow and others drew inspiration and to which a number of them gave grateful acknowledgment; she concluded by dwelling again upon the ethical side of all Jewish legends.

That was Ray Frank, the silver-tongued orator!

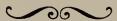
¹¹⁷ Cf. Louis Ginzberg, Legends of the Jews (Philadelphia, 1913), vol. IV, p. 42, on the "Shemiel" myth.



LETTERS OF AMBROSE BIERCE, NINA DAVIS AND OTHERS



"Letters of Ambrose Bierce"



It was in 1895, as stated above, when Ray was very much in the public eye as a preacher and lecturer that she met Ambrose Bierce. 119 They were exchanging frequent letters, first when due to attacks of asthma, he was spending most of his time in Los Gatos, California, then when he went to Washington, D. C. and again when he returned to California. His letters show that he was very much impressed by Ray's personality and intellect. It is not the bitter cynical Bierce who is revealed in these letters, not an infidel, as he was often spoken of, but a man invoking again and again God's blessings upon Ray, a considerate and patient Bierce discussing carefully the manuscripts of short stories which Ray was submitting for his criticism and showing a most friendly interest in her various activities. "Have you been lecturing and preaching recently?" writes Bierce on April 10, 1895. "If you have may I know what you said and what good you did by saying it? Perhaps it would be difficult for you to say what good you did, just signify the measure of your hope

¹¹⁸ See *supra*, pp. 29-30.

¹¹⁹ For bibliography on Bierce, see *supra*, note 41, p. 29.

and I can make the needful deduction." This letter was in reply to one of Ray's. He writes in it that he was the author of a spell which compelled her to write to him. It contained an invitation for her to come to Los Gatos which

You must, really, see . . . in its vernal wedding garment. The hills are blazing and (I think) smoking with the brilliant atmosphere and the wild flowers are worth a month's journey to see.

In a letter of May 5, 1895, after noting that Ray has been talking to the "incurables of the New Salon," Bierce ridiculed the

notion of a salon founded in cold blood by might and main and malice aforethought, with a stern determination to "make it go." It rather reminds one, [wrote Bierce,] of Chicago deciding to have a literature and wondering that it had not thought of it before.

He admonished Ray

O, most earnest of all possible girl Rabbis and prettiest of the land, do thou come out from among the Philistines and be good again, or, faith, I must remove your tongue. And that I am loth to do . . . But if you will talk to that crowd, and will not come and talk to me, it must e'en come out.

On May 14th, while Bierce was too ill to write much, he wanted Ray to know that he does not require her to bring a chaperone when she comes to Los Gatos.

I'm quite liberal that way, and can trust you in Los Gatos unattended otherwise than by me. So that is the reply that you so humbly beseech. I simply tell you of my unneed of the chaperone—my distaste for her—my dislike of full grown beings who accept her.

But maybe that is because I'm not well. God be good to you.

On July 2nd, Bierce wrote:

Surely I shall be glad to see you, for any reason. If you come on Sunday I shall give that day to you—but let me know at once, so that I may "keep it holy"—or wholly for you. Why not come on the Saturday afternoon train and stay overnight? Or are you of those who pay allegiance to Mrs. Grundy?

In a letter of July 4th, Bierce asks:

What have I done since you wrote the charming letters of a few weeks ago? Never mind—I'm preparing my iciest reception for you. As to your new story, I don't care whether your characters are purely imaginary or not—nor whether, as I suspect, I sat for one of them; nor, if I did, what you've made of me. The only question of interest is how you've done the work. Send it along.

A few days later, on July 13th, obviously in reply to a communication from Ray,

I am so accustomed to having my letters considered "ill-natured," "sarcastic" and so forth that I can't say it gave me a particular sensation, other than a mild disgust. I did not, however, expect this kind of thing from you. The letter in question was written in illness, but it happens that illness does not make me "cross," that I had no reason to be surly with you, and that the letter was in point of fact absolutely good natured. Its adversity lay in the mind of the reader.

On July 16th, Bierce wrote:

Well, you know how to make an apology—and that is a very rare literary equipment. But certainly if the act apologized for was intended as "humor" you are right in abjuring that "figure of speech" at once and forever.

The letter refers to Ray's manuscripts which he considered in connection with her attempts to write short stories. It contains also the first reference to Ray's sister, Esther, apropos of whom he wrote:

be thought worthy to know her—not even if I'm content to be the holiest of hypocrites and cloak my awful nature in the mantle of silence . . . Please don't speak of "gratitude"—I've done nothing for you, and perhaps shall not be able to help at all. But if I unconsciously supply plots for stories, that will be something, won't it? I'm good for character studies, too, apparently—many of my writing friends have "served me up" repeatedly. But none have (happily) had the insight to make me quite such a monster of depravity as you perceive me to be.

On August 4th, Bierce wrote of his going to visit the wigwam of one of the members of a hill tribe to look after a patient from the Children's Hospital in San Francisco.

She's at Pomona Farm with her leg in a plaster-of-Paris [cast] these many weeks. You might not care for the patient, but I'm sure you'd care for the walk down the mountain side, the moon and all that—I mean the imp would . . .

No, I did not go all the way to San Jose on the evening of the perfect day (O how imperfect, I thought it) but I did last evening; dined there alone and rode back—bike-back—by the longest route I could find. The truth is, that route has some memories living along it. You've no idea how many memories dwell in the various places of the earth. You kids live in a desolate, uninhabited country—a great lone land where there is nothing but people and people you, before you, behind you—everywhere. Ghosts, my child—all ghosts; and strange to say, every soul of them knows me. So I'm not "obscure" anyhow . . .

Your sister's good opinion of me—that I'm "as good as can be"—is most gratifying. Whom the gods wish to destroy they make good . . .

I'm so glad those clubs did not offer you anything to lecture. If you can be any way chased off the platform perhaps you'll take to the writing desk and do something worth doing. Happy thought: attend all your lectures and cut them

up in the newspapers! Read all your writing and beslubber it with praise! Result, a nice girl reclaimed at the cost of an old man's worthless soul.

On August 11th, Bierce wished that Ray could have been in Los Gatos for a ramble on the mountain side for this is a "perfect day" meteorologically.

Otherwise—well, I've been trying to entertain my patient with the incapable leglet, who has come down from the hill-top to the hotel. "Of what sex is she?" Why, of yours, naturally—you would not expect me to take much interest in a person of my own, would you? . . .

Please kiss your sister for me if among your people that is permissible. If not I shall have to do it myself, and then!!! [a sketch of a corpse] The late A. B.

In a letter of August 21st, he tells Ray:

I shall have to disappoint you in respect of "clubbing" the W. P. A.¹²⁰—I shall club no one for some weeks. My insomnia (did I tell you I suffered from it?) has returned and is devastating all my poor little store of intellectual faculties. It has not yet invaded my bodily health, but one likes to be well, even in his mind. So my editor has given me a vacation and I mean to put in a part of it roaming on my bicycle, trying to become tired enough to sleep . . . Who was the poor girl about whose death you write so feelingly, and who persecuted her? . . .

Please present my love to Miss Esther and see that I get the double return—hers and yours—hers + yours she would put it.

On August 24th, Bierce wrote:

It is "nice" of you to be solicitous about my health, and to prescribe so novel a cure for insomnia that I am sure to try it. If it prove any efficacy it will be because of the letter which I'm to hold crumpled in my hand. That may produce sleep that way, but your letters taken in natural way are

¹²⁰ Women's Press Association.

not particularly hypnotic. They make me very wide awake. I wonder what would be the effect of one of your sermons or lectures. They say that these too stimulate; since your last sermon even the Colonel¹²¹ has redoubled her already great admiration of you . . .

Bierce fell from a bicycle at the beginning of September. In a letter of September 5th from St. Helena, he wrote:

It is impossible yet to know the nature and extent of my injuries. They are serious enough at the best. Whether my kneecap is broken or not the swollen condition of the leg prevents us from determining. If so it is likely that I shall have a stiff leg as a bequest (I scorn to say leg-acy) of the incident . . . Doubtless I shall remain in bed a long time, but I have an excellent physician (who abstains mostly from advice) and the best of care. So you need not worry about doing anything for me.

I must exculpate the bicycle—the accident was as usual the fault of the rider (this is to encourage Miss Esther) . . .

I had a sweet and sympathetic letter from the Colonel, who in the fervor of her loyalty to me has vowed vengeance upon the bicycle and enlisted under the Corner of Dr. Woolsey. Possibly her loyalty to him might be whispered as a contributory cause. She's a good girl, anyhow. So are you.

On September 23rd, Bierce wrote:

I hope you'll be glad to learn, that my leg is not as badly damaged as I feared. No bones are broken either in that or elsewhere. I am clumping about, when out of bed, on crutches, and am not an impressive figure. Miss Esther has not thought it worth while to write me—so I know nothing of her or you since the eleventh. I have heard from the Colonel, though, and she is as sweet-tempered as ever.

You'll be sorry to know that Lily Walsh is still very ill and despondent. She thinks she will not recover. So I'm naturally anxious to get to her as soon as possible and make

¹²¹ In a number of his letters Bierce mentions the "Colonel," apparently referring to Mrs. Nettie Hirshberg.

her cheerful. My patient at the Children's Hospital, too, is looking into the Valley of the Shadow rather too curiously, and her friends are alarmed about her. I have no luck with my pets—even [Carroll] Carrington is ill and discouraged. Thank God: the lizard and the horned toad are well, and Billy is presumably happy in Esther's sunshine. God keep you.

On November 3rd, Bierce expressed a sorrow that he had

no opportunity to talk with you, when we met over that little bit of mortality at the undertaker's. I should like to talk to you about poor Lily, and tell you what interesting things she did, knowing that she was dying. One was to write her epitaph—which was both wise and witty. No common girl could have done that . . .

I wish you come here some day for a stroll on the hillside. Can't you?

"What has become of your visit to Los Gatos?" asked Bierce on November 25th.

What a title for a poem—"The Lost Visit." I dare say we shall find it awaiting us in the other world if we are good.

I'm glad you were not displeased by my reference to your "personality"—if you really were not. Perhaps you have not previously been aware that you have a personality; for that, I take it, implies a body, and a body implies so many unspiritual things beloved of the coarse creatures of clay who are the despair of religious philosophy. But I insist that your body is no illusion—that it is largely you.

It does not surprise me that the "society lady" interpreted my words of you, as she did; I think you should be charitable with her, and not "throw the first stone." (Do you discern the awful and profound meaning in that?—and are you not conscience-mauled duly?)

Alas! When are the goblin eyes to beam upon my shadowed life for its betterment? . . .

The December 15th letter expressed the hope

for some small sign of your continued—or recovered—good will. Perhaps you have been hoping for some small sign of my meriting it by a befitting penitence. Alas, my heart is hard—I am wedded to my idols, whereof your "womanness" is one.

But it is more likely that you have been hoping that you would get no sign from me at all, henceforth and forever. Well, I am going to Oakland on Monday—in the morning—and shall be at the Metropole Hotel. Any intimation of your will and wish, advanced to me there, will be loyally obeyed. But, meantime—before I know that I am to be cast into outer darkness—while there still is a small possibility of your favor—I send you a kiss.

The letter of December 18th started with

My dear Ray (for I cannot consent to your further incumbency of that pedestal represented by the meanest word in our language, "Miss"). Your letter has given me a bit of a pain. I shall not accept your physician's diagnosis of your case, even if it does agree with yours. If I lived in a cabin, away from civilization—as I should love to do—it would be different. That physician would seem to me the wisest of men and I should take it upon myself as a labor of love to administer his prescription, together with one of my own. O, well, nine tenths of us die of destitution, which has many forms besides that of starvation; and why should you be exempt? Why, indeed, except that your non-exemption is unjust and evil. If I had a cabin—no, that is easy enough; the unattainable thing is the patient . . .

So it is farewell to "That"! My dear girl, it shall be in all things as you say; and you are good to say no worse. God love you.

On December 25th, Bierce wrote:

My dear Ray (there you are without your pedestal—how do you think you look?) . . . I was in San Francisco Monday evening and should have been glad to see the inside of 1409, but man proposes and woman disposes of his proposal and of him: I had to see Another . . .

Are you really going to "the wilderness"? And does that mean your Nevadanese cloudland? There is a good deal of wilderness this way, you know. How good it would be to think, as I look at some one of the many white houses perched away up on the summits and sides of these hills, that it contained a black browed ghost staring not unkindly down upon this world and remembering that once upon a time she was of it and a blessing to it! And sometimes a hardy spirit from the Below would go up there ghosting—and return lamenting!

Seriously are you so ill? And shall you go away?

Please deliver for me one kiss upon the cheek of Her Mathematics.

May I hear from you? This is the Feast of Fools, but I'll not bother you with any appropriate sentiments.

A letter of January 5, 1896, told of

a despondent letter from [Carroll] Carrington, who, it seems, has been ill, and who is easily discouraged anyhow, I fear. I wish you knew him and would cheer him up a bit —I have confessed to him my inability to do so. Poor little wretch! He is quite a child in many ways. And how frightfully inaccessible most of what one cares for must seem to a fellow like him . . . Your house in the redwoods was invisible all this afternoon, although there was apparently neither mist nor haze. I demand an explanation. Is there any house there? Is there really any you? Is there anything but this Ego and its dreams? And when it wakes, what?

On January 17th, Bierce informed Ray that he is called away to Washington.

There is no time to see you—which I need not tell you I should like to do. There is, indeed, hardly time for anything.

It is my hope that in a few months I shall return—the thought of living away from California is not agreeable, and nothing but an imperative demand of duty would take me away. But you are going to Nevada yourself. May you there find health and peace and rest. Believe me, I shall not soon forget you as—as I ought. And I shall write you when I get an "address."

May God be very good to you and to your sweet sister.

A few letters that follow were written from Washington, D. C. In the one dated February 2, 1896, he wrote:

I live in an atmosphere thick with telegrams, and hardly time to read letters, much less to write them. Still I should like the opportunity to read one of yours. You will write, will you not? My health is good and my boy is with me. How long I shall remain, or where go when I leave, I have not had the curiosity to inquire. If one is not to live near Another One how can it matter where one is to live? I have "still with me" my dream of the cabin in the hills,—that is something. And you? Pray tell me of your health, and if you are going, or have gone, to Nevada . . .

Please give my love—O lots of it!—to Esther, and may the grim God of your people soften his heart to the sweetest daughter.

"What gave me the idea that you were going to Nevada?" wrote Bierce on February 23rd,

—that is the first question to catch my eye in looking, for the manyth-time, at your letter. Why I really do not know somebody said (or I dreamed) that you were going there to be the Governor's secretary.

I think as little of physicians in general as you, but their diagnosis of your "case" alarms me a little—you don't mind my taking the liberty to be alarmed, do you? Ah, how I wish it were in my power to add you to "my patients"—I always have at least one. I should make you live in a tent, out of civilization; and I'd occupy an adjacent tent, so as to look after you. And sometimes of a pleasant afternoon we would sit together and rail at Civilization—as I have done all my life—while you, poor girl, fell in love with her. Of course she "hits you hard blows"—whom does she not?...

No, this is not the letter that I'm to write, for this is but one of, O, so many that I am to write before tomorrow morning. When I write you a letter—a real sure enough letter—I do not want all those others on my mind . . .

I have been to New York three times already since coming—the last time my sole mission was to write an editorial. That is the kind of life I am living. If I too do not get nervous prostration it will be because I'm immune from lack of nerves. I wish I could get it if it would free you from it.

O yes, my good and pretty friend, I know very well that there is a non-Euclidian solution to the problem of how One is to live near Another, even with another; but the solution of the problem raised by that solution is not so simple a matter. You are wise in all the wisdom of the schools (which is trash)—in all the learning of the Doctors—who are fools. And you are wise otherwise and betterwise. But you cannot solve that second problem, and nobody can, and nobody ever did. "Her Mathematics" is as competent there, with her figures and symbols, as the prophet, his lips touched with a live coal from the altar. Shall I state the problem, or does your instinct teach your inexperience what it is? God bless and make you well, and let me sometime soon see you again.

On April 8th, Bierce wrote

described the dear old hills in their unaccustomed garmentage of snow? And now I suppose they are afire with poppies and all manner of wild flowers. And my poor little dead girl—to whom you were kind—is lying out there under her daisies, as deaf and dumb as ever . . .

If I were not a wicked infidel I should pray to some of the gods that your mysterious divination may not be at fault. And I think it will not be: you are of those to whom it is given to "know things otherwise." I'm sure that all things in nature have messages for you; and with some inner spiritual sense you occasionally catch the meaning of their various voices . . . There's no safety for secrets where you turn those black browed orbs, but thank Heaven, they cannot penetrate the great swell of earth now separating us two! If they could you would say: "Thou fool!" . . . "Am I to come back?" Who can know? In a month or two, probably, I shall go to New York (where, by the way, I have recently

been—and been ill) and then—well, Miss Mystic, bend your pretty ear to some of your "voices" and find out. And then tell me.

Did I tell you of a man here that reminds me of you? His manner, his look, his voice all recall you in the most wonderful way. He and I (partly in consequence, I suspect) have become very good friends, and as was to have been expected I find him the finest fellow that I have met here. Doubtless you and he were twins in some former incarnation. He was perhaps a Mahatma and you a Mahatmess.

I am at last a person of steady habits—going to bed punctually at 3 a.m. and rising at 11 and missing my dinner with great regularity. I carefully avoid books, art, music, woman and all such mischievous influences. In short, my candle of life is consuming with a serene and unfitful flame at both ends and in the middle . . . The only rational recreation that I permit myself to enjoy is—O well, I sometimes think of you and the days that are no more but might have been more. Go, and read my allegory of "Haïta the Shepherd," and strew penitent ashes on your head, you prodigal daughter!

Please present my love to Esther, the dearest and best of good sisters; and believe me . . . your most devotedly.

On May 13th, Bierce wrote:

You are probably in the mountains now, but I hope this will search you out and tell you of all who love you I hold myself chief. What would I not give to lay mine eyes upon your "out-of-doors" suit? It is distinctly forked, I'll swoon . . . So death has struck you—through another. I can sympathize with you, for he has hit me pretty hard—harder than anybody will ever know. Indeed, nobody could suspect that the blow would touch me at all. How little we know of the tragedies in one another's lives. Well, we escape the condoling of our friends, and that is much. I can not send you a photograph of your brother of old; or rather, I would prefer not. The camera cannot catch so elusive thing as that resemblance, nor (probably) any eye but mine discern it; for I knew you both in that ancient day—was doubtless a friend of the family . . . Are you really coming East? That

will be pleasant. Within a few weeks I shall probably be in New York; anyhow I would gladly go up there to see you if you did not come here to see me . . . Do I think you would look well with gray hair? My dear girl, I think you would look well (to me) with no hair at all. And why should you not be gray if I am? It is nature's way of equalizing matters that are related, one to the other. But I know the ashes of repentance have nothing to do with it. A girl's conscience is an odd thing, and unspeakably perverse. What ought in reason to afflict you with the keenest remorse you doubtless feel a tranquil satisfaction in. Were I the Creator I would create Girl more nearly to the heart's desire—my heart's desire. Still, she would in many ways resemble you.

Bierce has been quite ill from late in May until the early part of July, 1896.

On June 11th, he wrote from Washington:

... I really was very ill—a general breakdown from overwork and lack of sleep. That I am much better is evident from my return, though I'm not well by much. In a few days, if able to travel, I shall go to New York, to remain I do not know how long . . .

You were not good to me in keeping me in ignorance of your actual state of ill health, but I am too grateful for your recovery to reprove you. You are a lucky girl to be so far from civilization and in companionship with the mountains and the wild flowers—and I a most wretched mortal in being unable to share your good fortune and you.

Thank you for your kind interest in me. Please remind Esther of my existence and my continued affection.

The next letter was written on July 13th, from Englewood, New Jersey.

During my long illness my correspondence and memory have fallen into such confusion that I hardly know, and in many instances cannot ascertain, whom I have written to, or when. But I think I must have sent you a line before leaving Washington a month ago. My health is only just now restored, for I had a bad relapse after coming here.

But enough of myself—you are a more interesting topic—do you remember how interesting I used to find you those evenings at your house? And you are recovering too. Who would not living the natural life that you have done up there in God's country? Do you go bare-footed as well as bare-headed and bare-hearted? . . .

This is a very beautiful place, with a different beauty from that of your surroundings—a highly cultivated garden studded with superb country dwellings of rich persons—a suburb of New York, only a half hour distant by train, and only two miles from the Hudson river at "the Palisades." And the Hudson at that point is the noblest river I know anywhere . . . My future is still in the shadow, but doubtless I shall be hereabouts the rest of the season . . .

Please give my love to Esther, the sweet girl—and may the God of your fathers always bless you.

In September, Bierce came to New York. He wrote on September 22nd,

My health was so bad in Englewood that I had to leave and thought I would try sewer gas and other urban remedies for human ills. I trust you have recovered from the effects of your indiscretion in sitting up to talk to a handsome and clever man. By the way, I met young [William Chapman] Ralston here a few weeks ago—just after getting your letter—and accused him of being the man. He pleaded not guilty and so escaped with his life. How interesting you will be when I am privileged to see you again—with all your new store of sentiments born of the mountains and speaking a "various language," which I a mountaineer by nature and much experience shall easily understand . . .

Something reminds me to say that I wish you knew Mrs. Hearst. She is now, I think, in California. You would like her and she you . . . If opportunity serve do make her acquaintance; and you may tell her that you know me and that you are a dear, good girl, and clever, and all that, and I am the chief of those who love you.

After an interval of over five weeks Bierce sent a

letter from Hunter, Greene County, New York on October 30th:

Well, I'm here, though I was nearly three weeks coming, having to stop at several towns en route from inability to travel. Here is a little village in the Catskills, away up in the air. The mountains are always good to me, as to you, and my health is already improved. Is it not odd—we two taking the mountain air cure with all those needless leagues between? How little one is captain of his fate is shown in the fact that I am not with you—or you with me . . .

Probably, I shall remain here—about all winter. I am doing no work—am doing nothing but sleep, and I have a better understanding of Rip Van Winkle's weakness for lying "abed" rather late in these hills. When am I coming home? Dear child, I don't know, I've been too ill to do any of the many things (for myself) which I remained in this country to do. If well all winter I can do them and go back to California and stay there—if you are very good. You are now—or will be then—so well and beautiful and happy that with all those gifts, much will be expected of you. Is that not reasonable? . . .

But I must say good night and God bless you. Mentioning God reminds me that I have been rereading the Hebrew "Scriptures"—such as we have in translation—reading them critically. I think I've some new light on them as literature. But you know them so much better than I that it would be presumption in me to utter judgment.

Again good night—and again (and again) God bless you.

A letter dated December 27, 1896, from Los Gatos dealt with Ray's sister Esther's breakdown:

Surely Esther is not so weak a character as to wither like that in a little frost of injustice, in a world where every night brings its frost. Was she, then expecting to find this a world of righteousness and tenderness? No, I shall not believe her capable of "brooding" over her wrongs, real or fancied—that is the way of the simpleton, and the "madness" which "that way lies" is not a peril to noble natures.

Esther, I suspect, has been working too hard and should rest . . .

As to me, I am getting well, and in a week or two shall be able to work, I hope. I can already be out of the house. Just one climb of the hillside, up the devious old road that you know about, will finish my cure. In the meantime I shall exert such will power as I have to effect the recovery of Esther. If I "make believe real hard" I'm sure it will help her. That sort of thing done by an infidel to a Jewess can not, I suppose, be called "Christian Science," but may be the name will not matter if nature will prosper the work.

On January 5, 1897, Bierce wrote:

Please think no more about it, and on my part I agree to keep my clumsy hands off your personal affairs and disposition. I think you are a very good girl, and that is all I wanted any girl to be, except happy. Criticism, of even the friendliest and gentlest sort, evidently increases neither your goodness nor your happiness. I shall remember that I am not your Guide, Philosopher and Friend by appointment, just your Friend (I hope) by accident.

On January 18th, Bierce wrote of his desire to visit Ray while he was in Oakland and persuade her to take a long walk, but a case of asthma sent him gasping back to Los Gatos by the earliest train.

That is the kind of petty persecution that Fate is pleased to inflict on a worthy man and law abiding citizen—law abiding as a rule, and worthy on occasion.

And now comes your physician's advice to affect me like a personal bereavement! . . .

Is the throat really worse? My prescription is country air—such as I take for mine own (other) ills. God bless thee.

Writing on February 8th, Bierce referred to the kindly sentiments of Ray's letter and of the hope to go up and see her. Twice he was driven back by a sudden threat of asthma—

Please let me know about your own health—it is not "nice" of you to exact the letter of the law and require an "answer." To say truth I don't know but I did answer—my mind is in a state of chaotic disturbance, and the inner man at the recording desk has taken a mean advantage of the situation and gone pleasuring.

We have a bit of sunshine now which is to me a promise of returning sanity. I've a theory that all disorders, mental, physical and moral are due to obscuration of the sun; if one could live above "the cloud" one would be sound in every way. The belief in "Heaven" is probably only a faulty expression of that fact, in consciousness.

I wish you were here to help me sit before the fire these wild nights; I really need that assistance.

The letter of February 22nd told of snow which

we've had for days, and the entire range of hills . . . is glittering with it yet. It lay over the hill in front of the hotel, obliterating much, but not the memory of you and the hillside road and the moonlight that has these many months been gathered to its fastness.

When you and Esther come here for your vacation—but I dare say you will not; so I shall make no predictions of brave walks and mighty talks and famous so forths. The Lord be good to you.

"I think it is very unkind of you to forget me all these ages," he wrote on March 14, 1897.

It has just occurred to me, however, that you may have written me. My letter box here was robbed one night, with nearly a week's mail in it (I was absent in Berkeley, very ill—had I been well you would have seen me.) Now if you had a letter in that unhappy bunch I shall think my loss more serious than I'm disposed to consider it now. Please allay my anxiety by answering me you were too indifferent to write!

Seriously, I want to hear from you, and learn how you are—and how Esther is—and the good little niece.

I fear to go to Oakland again since the horrible experience

of that week, so it must be long before I see you, I suppose. And that is a privation.

"So the pretty throat is still full of trouble like man that is born of woman. I'm sorry," he stated in a letter on March 18th.

No, I have not seen Gertrude Atherton's new book. As she and I are no longer in correspondence she will probably not send me a copy . . .

You may write "Prattle" for a few weeks—I am making editorials for the N[ew] Y[ork] Journal and telegraphing them. Don't be hard on the dear poets, please—you are one yourself: "mute" and "inglorious" may be, but a poet essentially.

The country is very beautiful, and yesterday I went lizarding, with success. I've two nice little fellows; so you see I'm not wholly destitute of something to love me—which they do as soon as I can teach them that I'm the source of flies and grasshoppers. God love you.

Ray's refusal to become a rabbi elicited the following remarks from Bierce (April 11, 1897):

Are you not afraid of incurring the hatred of the various kinds of Colonels of your sex? Pray reconsider rebellious action and advance the Cause of Woman. By the way, I suppose the real cause of woman is God's resentment to man: He gave her in punishment. She is a "punitive expedition" sent against us to lay waste our kingdom and subvert our dynasty. Yet we receive her at the border with open arms. And that's the way I should like to receive you in my little realm. What strange fatuity . . .

I wish you could see your hillside from my window; it looks like a city cut out of a panorama of Paradise. Well I am here and you are there; and that is a tragedy.

"Your good letter," wrote Bierce on April 28th, found me very ill (which is not unusual) and hardly able

[&]quot;Prattle," a daily column by Bierce in the San Francisco Examiner.

to understand anything, even your visions and mysticism. Maybe I have "answered" it, and told you how seriously ill I was—I don't recollect very well what I've done in the last two weeks—except my newspaper work, which does itself . . . I had several days of doctor's stuff and nursing—preceded by "spells" of fainting. Now I feel all right, but am keeping quiet . . .

When am I going to say something nice about you? Right now: "I like you." Alas that I should not be able to add: "That is not all the good it does me." May I ask if you have given up all thought of literature as a vocation? I wish I could reach up to the spot on the mountain where the red and white violets grow and gather a handful for you.

God bless you.

In two undated letters written between April 28th and June 19th, Bierce spoke of a relapse.

I am hardly able to pretend to work. At the first of next week (if able) I shall go to Los Gatos [from Berkeley] in the hope of health. I wish I could take you with me in the character of physician to the soul.

When he was able to move, Bierce came to Los Gatos. He was confined to the house. He wrote:

Pneumonia, I think the medico pronounces it.

It seems rather good to be here, ill or well. The weather is charming, and last night, at the imminent peril of remnant of health, I sat at my open window and looked at the moonlight on the hillside for hours.

They are all very good to me here—the town is prettier than ever, with its new electric lights, and the hotel is very smart with new paint. So I should be ungrateful not to recover. I thank you for your kind words, and Esther for hers—I can quite hear them. It will, I fear, be a long time before I shall dare go where I can hear them with the grosser ear . . . May you be happy and wise.

On June 19th, Bierce wrote from Los Gatos:

I'm not insensible to your goodness and your letter, but

have been continuously ill, and am unable to write letters and even think. I wish I could see you at Johannesberg—or anywhere—but well I am confined to my reclining chair and in the care of a nurse. The nurse is the best of nurses—a girl friend—so I'm not suffering for attention.

Referring to Ray's kind letter of June 24th, Bierce wrote (Los Gatos, July 5, 1897):

I have been, not of course too ill to write, but too ill to want to write—which is virtually the same thing, My illness was indeed, rather serious and prolonged, but now I am "up and out." But truly I am rather discouraged and glum. I shall probably have to seek another climate than California, and think of going to Washington—where my illness had no element of asthma.

I wish I could go up to your redwoods and "loaf" under them with you, but my arrears of work are too great to permit any loafing anywhere.

It is pleasing to know that *your* health improves. Honestly, I would rather have that true than to be well myself forever. It matters so little about me, so much about you . . .

I wish I could see you; there is much I should like to say—something to unsay. What a tangle it all is, and how little one can do to direct one's life, as one would have it. Those Grecian inventions, the Fates, are still active in human affairs; it is apparently useless to oppose them. Dear Ray, do you think there is a special, particular and particularly hot Hell for well-meaning persons? And if so is it otherwise than here—in Los Gatos? God be good to you.

In his letter of July 28th, Bierce told how gratified he was to learn of Ray's success in Oregon and of the pleasure that she got out of scenery of the Columbia river and the mountains.

For after all, Nature is better to us than man, and has that to give which he cannot supply. I am pleased, too, that you did not despise my little paragraph in your praise. Maybe I should have said that you were learned, and eloquent, and wise, and all that. I commended in you the quality

that seems to me the quality that seems to me the best. To be "charming"—how few of us can achieve that. And how "little worth" seem all other things in a woman—at least to me.

So I may hope to see you some day. That is good to think about.

Yes, Mrs. Nieto is still here. She admires you very much and seems to like to hear about you. She and I are very good friends; her deafness makes her interesting and her sweet disposition seems to confirm all the imagination has to say of her. You know my weakness for persons having physical defects—and for God's neglected among the lower forms of life, as well.

My health is restored, but I have not ventured to the bay since I saw you. Many of my friends (among them Markham and Carrington, last Sunday) have been here . . .

My blessing upon Esther's headful of figures—she is a "figurehead" in the mathematical sense—and upon your own dreamery.

On September 7th, Bierce spoke again of his illness and of his two weeks outing when he lived on the roads and slept in the fields, without writing materials:

I came back through Oakland and was strongly tempted to call on you, but I was in bicycle costume, without other clothing, and *you* are not a cyclist. I couldn't make up my mind to do it, but thought I would run up Saturday last. But God disposes as usual in about the same old way. Are you not going to come here ever again? The weather is delightful now, and the hills are tawny and glossy like the hide of a lion.

On September 12th, Bierce wrote:

I thought you knew all about my proposed bicycle journey (certainly I *wrote* you about it) . . . There was nothing to "leave word" about, for except that my first stopping place would be St. Helena, I had no idea where I should go. And —pardon me—there is something in atmosphere at 1409 when you are not there which chills a bit. Perhaps it is

fancy. While on way I wrote no letters that I did not have to write . . . Now for another matter . . . Surely you are mistaken when you say that I once laughed at you for coming to Los Gatos thinking me ill. I was ill, and had been very ill indeed, and did not laugh at you, nor for a moment think it other than good and sweet of you to come. That I "scolded" you during the day I confess, and very brutal it was of me; but that, you know very well, was for a quite different reason. Moreover, you forgave me all that.

Well, yes, dear Ray, you can be as ambiguous and unintelligible when you try, as an ancient prophecy or oracle. What you mean by the words you bracket in this letter I have no more notion than the man in the moon. But as you ask me not to "read you wrong" I'll try not to "read you" at all lest I do err. I'll just assume, if you please, that you mean right, and so let it go . . . I was "too ill to send you a line" on receipt of your letter, and had an "awful" week, but am now much better. Nobody was "with me," and the days and nights were pretty long. I shall have to go away from here.

I hope that not only September may restore all that August deprived you of, but that all succeeding months may bring you measureless good in reparation and atonement. I wish you might try living for yourself awhile—surely you have earned the right. But that is a matter that one cannot control. "We're all poor critters." I shall probably go up to the summit of the Santa Cruz mountains—among the redwoods. I want to be alone, to see nobody (since I cannot see whom I would), to think a little and perhaps write something besides pot-boilers. I want to sleep under the trees (as I did while away) and dream new kinds of dreams. Why does anyone want to live otherwise? Well, God bless you.

From Wright's Station, Santa Clara County on September 29th, Bierce wrote:

Dear Ray, I have just this moment arrived and find your letter. I wish something had told me of the friendly spirit of it when I was in Oakland yesterday thoughtfully avoiding Castro Street. I went over from the city (just before time to take the train to Los Gatos) to say good-bye to Mrs.

Crone and Nettie Hirshberg. Louise¹²³ and the others besought me to remain to a little party in the evening but I heroically declined until I was actually in the car (L. with me for a ride to the mole) where it developed that I had left my handbag with lots of things in it at a saloon. So I stayed to get it and—went to the party! Rabbi [Jacob] Voorsanger and Rabbi [M.] Friedlander were there and when I left (talked half to death) I had the foundation for a lovely case of asthma and fled by the earliest train.

I did not write you of my "removal" for the same reason that I did not call—uncertainty as to your frame of mind.

It is nearly a week since I came here very ill. I'm two miles from the station and 1800 feet in the air. My health was restored the first night, but I lost it again going to San Francisco to meet my daughter, who is to pass Saturday and Sunday with me . . .

It is good news that you are trying to write a little; you recollect how earnestly I advised you to. You are welcome to all that I can do to help you with the work. I have "quit" writing Prattle. It was an easy way to make a living, but a waste of years. When my health is re-established I shall do some literary work again.

I wish our relations were so comfortable that you could (and would) come to Los Gatos and I return there; but that is not to be dreamed of. We should fight all the time and have to be suppressed by the village constabulary. Ours is a long distance friendship, unhappily.

God bless you though, all the same.

An insight into Ray's frame of mind at that time may be gleaned from reading Bierce's letter of October 3rd concerning his being at the party.

I'm sorry that you feel (or rather felt, for I cannot think so strange a mood could last) just that way about so trivial an occurrence as my attending that party and meeting those persons. That it was in "the camp of the enemy" may or may not be true; I can only say that in that camp I have

¹²³ Carey McWilliams, Ambrose Bierce: A Biography, supra, p. 249, refers to a Louise Hirshberg.

never heard you spoken of otherwise than in terms of respect and friendship . . .

As to the two gentlemen whom you mention . . . I am very certain that neither of them mentioned or in any way alluded to you . . .

I should not in any case have called on you that day or evening, for the reason that I don't always know the secret springs of your—shall I say temper? Nor what your mood would be. I was, in fact, at the railroad station, and had bought my ticket to Los Gatos when persuaded to remain . . .

Dear Ray, you really should habituate yourself to more just and cheerful view of things. The hand of everybody is not against you. The things that rouse your anger are not always significant of unfriendliness, as in my case I know. I suppose you have had much to embitter you, but adversity, injustice, even wrong should not embitter; they should sweeten and soften. In their tendency to embitter lies all their evil. Deny them the power to do that and you are invulnerable. All else that disaster and malevolence can do to us is a trifle compared with the wreck that they may make of our dispositions, and characters.

I called you once a daughter of light and fire. Don't let the light blind you, nor the fire consume. If you do not have my philosophy of indifference—if you must care what your enemies do and say—then you should cultivate the habit of considering whether you have so many as you seem (to yourself) to have and whether it is likely that they do and say all that you suspect. I'm rather an expert in enmities and antagonisms, and I find that they have not so large and important a place in one's life and affairs as one has a tendency to think.

Pardon all this, dear friend; I am older and worldly wiser than you and have worn war-paint all my life. It is not worth while to hate anybody, nor to assume that anybody is taking much trouble to be malignant and vengeful . . . I think it is unlikely that you have any enemies. Some that you think such I *know* are not.

From Wright's Station, Bierce wrote on October 18th:

That letter of yours has gratified me exceedingly, that is all I have to say of it.

You are an odd creature in your contradictory moods and tenses. How one who is at times so charming can be at other times so—don't you just dare me to finish that sentence?

You are right—the weather here is so delightful that I can't work at all—just stroll about the redwoods and go dreaming on the hillside trails . . . I should be very glad to meet your Dr. Trask, unless—but I'll say that, not write it . . . Did I tell you I had stopped writing "Prattle?" Well, I have, and hope now to make something occasionally that I like.

In an undated letter Bierce wrote of his

going to New York as soon as I can manage it. It is a matter of "duty and death," if the latter do not intervene I shall come back. After all, it does not matter—our letters will be a little longer on the way, but nothing else is altered. With a thousand things claiming attention, I have only time to commend myself to Esther and Gertrude and invoke a blessing on you all. God love you.

Upon return to Los Gatos, Bierce on December 26, 1897, expressed his pleasure that

the clear, cold weather has been good for you and has given you roses in your cheeks. They are, I suppose, guarded by the same old thorns.

I too have enjoyed the weather, explored new old roads in the hills, gathered yerba buena and reveled in the first manzanita blossoms of the season . . . So you are really cured. Well, we shall have to celebrate that with appropriate rites, and ceremonies. It is great news! I'm impatient to know what the Sibyl who presides over the Fountain of Youth has told you. Do you think I'm too far gone in age to be benefitted by the secret?

How fortunate you are in being a Jewess and thereby escaping all this hollow nonsense of Christmastide. Always at this season I feel a strong suasion toward the Hebrew faith and a peculiar tenderness for the memory of the late Judas Iscariot.

My love to Esther and the girls, and my best benediction upon your pretty head.

A letter from Los Gatos dated merely Friday was written probably in early January, 1898; he spoke of his returning the newspaper clippings and added:

It pleases me that you are appreciated even by my "loath-some contemporaries." If they could only know how nice you are as a woman. I fear your niceness as a lecturer would seem too trivial by comparison to be deemed worthy of exposition. I am filled with a sense of superiority when I reflect that they really know nothing about you that is worth knowing . . .

My health is not yet restored and I'm unable to work, but I shall be well, I hope, in a few days.

Where are you and Esther going? Why not Congress Springs? I think you both liked that place and it is not very far from here, you remember. For that matter, why not Los Gatos; though honestly I am tiring of it myself...

No, I shall not court illness soon again by passing a night down there in the Land of the Disorderly Lung.

In the following letter, dated merely Saturday, Bierce wrote:

Ray Frank, you are criminally handsome and I believe you know it. Otherwise you would not have sent that photograph to disturb my peace, for how could you know that it would do so? I fear I like to have my peace disturbed, and would enjoy even its total dispelling by your bodily presence. By the way, I am sure that my timid suggestion of Los Gatos as a suitable place for Esther and her nurse was worthy of consideration.

How is she? I have been thinking of what you said of her "seriousness." It seems to me that you both take life and life's trivial affairs too seriously. "Life is a tragedy to those who feel and a farce to those who think," says Goethe, I believe. I have myself held both views—"simultaneously and successively." I now hold neither; life seems to me—but the subject is long; I must expound at another time. Meantime

I may change my mind about it all. But tell me—how is Esther?

I had a pleasant visit from Mr. Markham on Thursday, and (apropos of your picture, I think) he spoke admiringly of you. But-I liked him already.

I am so far convalescent that I have been up the hillside road past where you lost your comb and found your story? What became of the story? Are you holding it until it completes itself? Or is it complete?

"I hardly know what to think," he wrote on January 13, 1898,

and am sorry indeed to have *you* in the "innumerable caravan" that makes engagements at Los Gatos and does not keep them. It is a trifle mortifying to go to the train, as I did yesterday morning, to meet a friend, and not meet her. You might at least have telegraphed that you would not come, or even written.

Perhaps you did not telephone (the message was given me by the clerk of the hotel)—perhaps some evil spirit personated you for my undoing . . . Well, I dare say it is all right somehow, but also it is disagreeable.

Two days later, on January 15th, he wrote:

You must forgive me for scolding you. Some one in Oakland indubitably personated you at the telephone. I did not get the message myself as I hate the telephone. The clerk of the hotel came to my room to learn if I would be at home the next day—some one in Oakland wanted to know, namely, "Miss Frank." He returned to the phone with an affirmative answer, whereupon Miss Frank explained that she would arrive the next day on the morning train. Nobody came. Was it perhaps, your alter ego. Or your astral body? Or did you do it while somnambulizing? O, well, the only thing I regret is that you did not come . . .

I really do not know how one is to "write up" one's self. It is something that I have a hundred times declined to do or to permit. My last proposals from *Current Literature* and the *Boston Herald* last week. And do you know I'm con-

vinced that *not* to do that thrifty thing will keep one obscure for many years? I *know* that nearly all our well known authors habitually do it. Well, I think you and I can afford to wait rather than bawl our own names into the speaking trump of fame.

On January 19th, he wrote:

I have time only to thank you for your friendly offer, but I cannot consent. That is to say, I don't care a pin what any one may write of me, but cannot have a hand in it myself by even so much assistance as saying whether I'm a boy or a girl. I've a kind of stereotyped reply to proposals (from strangers to "write me up") namely: "If you have read my books you have all the data that are necessary for writing of me what I care to have written."

And I'm quite sincere: nothing that could be written of my life and character would give me pleasure. So, dear, don't bother with such an impossible fellow as I, but just leave me to posterity. I thank you all the same.

On January 30th, he wrote:

Fate seems to have decided that I'm to call on you no more. From Sunday till Thursday I lay ill—at the Crellin Hotel; then thanked God for the strength to come away. Naturally, I did not feel like seeing you, for I could not talk much and felt very miserable—am somewhat miserable yet . . .

I saw Mrs. Hirshberg and the girls, for I was almost next door to them; and they were very good to me . . .

Now what can a fellow do whom "whatever gods may be sentence" to sickness whenever he plans to see you? Is it that they are jealous?...

I hope you are well and happy and wish your "paths of peace" lay in my environment.

On February 10th, Bierce wrote that

Something has gone wrong with my eyes—which I've been abusing all my life—and for the present my friends (even you) will have to be content with brief letters. I do not

even read; and work only enough to keep me in board, lodging and clothes. I hope it won't last, but really it is serious.

I think the person who gets your letters and takes your name in vain at the telephone is a lunatic, and no doubt honest in her delusion that she is Ray Frank. It should be easy to catch her . . . God bless you and yours.

When Bierce learned of Ray's intended trip to Europe, he wrote on April 13th:

I am almost shocked to learn that you are really going—and so soon. There's nothing much in the distance, nor in the fact of your going alone; everything is so easy now in traveling and I shall have no apprehension about you. But I know it will be long before I see you again. Indeed, I almost fear that you'll succeed so well, that you'll not come back at all. If I had not been ill so much as to have exhausted my pockets I should surely go with you—as far as New York at least . . .

I need not say how glad I should be to see you if you could come. My health is still too precarious for me to venture to Oakland, or anywhere near it.

Well, I really did not think you'd go. But I am glad after all, for it may profit you much. God knows you ought to succeed. Devotedly yours.

Six and a half months separate the letter of April 13th from that written on November 1st, from Wright's, California, in which Bierce says:

I have been moving about a good deal for health and pleasure . . .

And you appear to have had a pleasant time too, in Cornwall and in your incursion into my old "stumping ground," Devonshire. Nothing could better prove your sound taste than your appreciation of rural England. I hold that something is lacking in one who does not find it charming. And London too is good in its way, though it is now the burial place of many of my friends. It is a city of ghosts, and in one of its fogs I should not dare to look behind me... When you write again please tell me of your work and how you

succeed, and don't forbid me to quote from your letter in "Prattle" (which I'm writing again) any little thing that will please your numerous well-wishers, and, maybe, be of service to you. I am anxious to help but can do so little.

As to me, my health has apparently been restored by my rambles. I mean to take a furnished cottage of five rooms near here and remain all winter. If you come home you and Esther can come to see me and stay—O, centuries if you will.

The last letter of Bierce's which I find was dated January 14, 1900; he wrote from Washington, D. C.:

A few weeks (I confess it was so long) before leaving, Esther wrote me enclosing a letter from you. As I cannot find it I fear it is with that part of my luggage which has not arrived. So I cannot "answer" it—I remember that it was a kind letter and that it had taken some pains to appraise me of some remedy for asthma—for which I thank you, as for much beside. I remember, too, that you signified a belief that I had not replied to all your letters. That, I think erroneous . . .

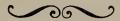
Of this be assured—that however those things may be I entertain for you the same warm and kindly sentiments that I always did. And should you return by way of Washington (God speed the day) you'll find that true. I don't know how long I shall be here—possibly till I die. I've no plans.

You need not be told that I shall always be glad to hear from you nor that *your* success, prosperity and happiness will be put down on the credit side of Heaven's account with $me \dots$

I'm not here on any "mission"—just living here because I like it. You too would like it if Europe has not spoiled you for America, as it once did me.

May God be very good to you.

"Letters of Nina Davis"



Ray made many friends on her travels. One of them was the gentle, gifted poet, Nina Davis, famous English Jewess. In her first letter to Ray, Nina Davis wrote (January 25, 1899):

Such a number of people had been asking us about you, and saying "Have you heard from Miss Frank?" whenever we saw them, that the news of you satisfied a great many besides ourselves. Your journey seems to have been delightful, it makes me long to see and hear the Rhine . . .

Your China bowl arrived very well mended, and I'm sure it would like to send its love to you if it could. We all miss you so much that we are quite sympathetic with it . . .

It is very good of you to think of sending me your news of Zangwill. We saw his mother and his brothers and sisters the other day. His brother seems even more melancholy than usual. Perhaps it is brotherly "Sehnsucht." . . .

I am going to a meeting which I think would interest you. There is to be a paper by Mr. Claude Montefiore and a discussion of the duties of English Jews in view of the anti-Semitism on the continent. There will probably be an excited debate . . .

Mother and father send you their best regards; in fact there are so many good wishes that I'm afraid my letter will be overweight . . .

The letter of March 19th was written from Westwood, near Leeds:

Now I am going to say something very selfish. I'm afraid you are having such a good time that you are not thinking of coming back. Except for that, I am glad you like Frankfurt so much.

You see, I am still in the North, enjoying the woods and the moors, but we return to London next Tuesday, to be home a little before Passover . . . It is very good of you to want to write about my misdeeds to the *American Hebrew*. If I could only invent something. Shall I tell you of how, born in a little town of Derbyshire, my fame spread with such rapidity that at the age of two months I was induced to come to London seeking a wider field for my precocious energies and how after 21 years and 365 times as many Hebrew lessons my "first fine careless rapture" developed into such an extraordinary volume of Hebrew translations as defies the power of mortal man to conceive. But to be serious, I hope to be able to tell you personally what you want . . .

I wonder if you heard of the death of Mrs. Nathan Joseph. It happened last Monday. She was hardly conscious for some time towards the end and it was very strange that on the day of Zangwill's return she (who you know was his friend) suddenly said apropos of nothing: "Stay with me until Zangwill comes." Perhaps she was saying it to Life. She died a few days afterwards . . .

On April 20, 1899, Nina Davis wrote:

I was so glad that at last you were able to speak without my talking at the same time. It grew quite bewildering, didn't it? How the spirit of telepathy must have rejoiced. I wonder if you have yet attained your ideal of becoming a "wooden woman with a stone heart." I doubt it; and is it very stronghearted of me to hope that you will never reach that height?

It gave me very much pleasure to see what you wrote about the possibility of my helping to serve the cause which is so dear to you—because you know how dear it is to me also . . .

There is a splendid article by Mr. Oswald Simon, in the present *Fortnightly Review*, called "The Unity of the Religious Idea." It is so clear and strong, and shows so vividly the picture of the one small people so many ages ago holding alone the conception of God, and holding it through

Oswald Simon, "The Unity of the Religious Ideal," Fortnightly Review, vol. LXV, new series [vol. LXXI, old series], April 1, 1899 (whole no. 388), pp. 666-679.

all the tragic history, while the whole world is working up to it through the mist of the various compromises . . .

Zangwill was here at the first day of Passover and read prayers with us in the evening. Until Friday he is in Bournemouth, as his mother has been ill, and he has taken her there to get strong. He has lent me the poems of Morris Rosenfeld, the Yiddish poet of New York. Probably you have seen them. How pathetic they are! I sympathize with your fears about Zangwill . . .

In a letter of May 30, 1899, Miss Davis asks:

Is there any chance of your being here on June 21st, for which date we have just received an invitation from Mrs. Leopold de Rothschild to an "at home," to meet the delegates of the Council of American Jewish Women, who will report on their work and their aims. It should be most interesting and I wish you could be there.

I had no idea that there existed such a condition of Judaism in Frankfurt. Isn't it dreadful to feel helpless when there are all these people to wake up. Did you address the "degenerate Frankfurters" in the synagogue? And what light could you possibly find in me to dazzle the eyes of those "that work in darkness." . . .

The letter tells of Zangwill's having taken great interest in a little girl in Boston, a Russian refugee, who at eleven years of age wrote a wonderful account in Yiddish of her journey from Plotzk to Boston, and translated it into English when she was fourteen.

Now she is fifteen. I have seen the English version which is published with a foreword by Zangwill. Her name is Mary Antin. I should think she will do something great one day . . . Zangwill is very much amused at your staying at Frankfort and living at San Francisco. He thinks you must be very fond of your name . . . How interesting for you to see in *Young Israel* the remarks you never made. I certainly should have recognized you more easily by the

¹²⁵ Mary Antin, From Plotzk to Boston, with a foreword by Israel Zangwill (Boston, 1899).

description of you than by the portrait. I don't know who sketched the latter and no one seems to know, which is most mysterious, but certainly it is not flattering. I have finished the translation of that MS. poem on the "Ages of Man" and found it very depressing . . .

The Simons are in great anxiety now. Lady Simon is so ill that I am afraid she cannot live much longer. She has lived to see the publication of her book, *By the Still Waters*. It is a study of the Psalms . . . London is a perfect whirl just now. During May and June it seems to reach the climax of excitement . . .

There are not many striking pictures in the Academy this year. One of those I like best is by Miss Cohen—Miss Briggs' friend . . . Solomon J. Solomon has chosen a subject more worth painting, I think, than most of the others. A knight is riding through a stream, singing, with his guardian angel over him, and in the background is a forest full of temptations from which he is triumphantly escaping . . . As to your things being in the way—quite reverse is the case. We enjoy having them, as they are the only things which seem to say you are coming back . . . Miss Schloss (the one who paints) was asking me about you when she and her brother dined with us. Though she has not talked to you much your face impressed her artistic sense.

The lengthy letter concludes:

Now I must really stop, you will be quite tired and bored. With best regards from all and love from both Elsie and me.

However, this was not the end of the letter; there followed this interesting postscript:

Perhaps you have read how the Queen [Victoria] has been flashing about London to celebrate her 80th birthday. I must just tell you how funny Mr. Elkan Adler was on the day of her arrival. It was the first day of Shevuoth, & directly after Synagogue he rushed off to see her, not staying as usual for the afternoon service, but saying it was a "Mitzvah" to go & see the Queen & that even Sabbath must give way before it. Then in the afternoon he was much con-

cerned because he had seen her & had forgotten to say the blessing one should say at the sight of a king or a queen: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who hast given of Thy glory to flesh & blood."...

The next letter was from the Isle of Wight (August 15, 1899) where the Davises were vacationing with the Marcus Adlers and the Lucases, making up "a very jolly party," enjoying every bit of the scenery, which

is not grand perhaps but so beautifully soft and restful...

I hope one day that you will see this island. It has been called "The Garden of England," and it is truly a little Paradise . . . I think you would find no fault with the behaviour of our climate during the three weeks we have been here. Every day and every night has been as perfect as it well could be . . . We all get on splendidly, so you see there is never a dull moment, and the only drawback is that there is also seldom a moment for writing letters . . .

In the evenings we usually congregate at the Adlers' and talk and sing and play. You can imagine how one can enjoy this life after the continual whirl of London. We all groan when anyone mentions the fact of the swift passing of our allotted five weeks . . .

I wonder whether you have heard of the death of Lady Simon. I know you will be sorry—but most of all for Oswald, who feels her death most terribly . . . I was very interested in what you said about the Woman's Congress. Certainly if the Council of Jewish Women does not justify its existence it would be better if it were not represented. But if we are to be represented at all, how else can it be but as Jews? It seems to me that the other religions are not represented because the members of them have all a country of their own, and are called Americans, or Frenchmen, or Germans, but though we have only a religion, we are still a nation; and isn't it better that we should be represented as such though we can only call ourselves Jews? . . .

Do you know it is nearly a year since I first saw you. Doesn't the time seem to have flown when one looks back? Is it because so much or so little has happened? I am never quite sure which it is that makes the months fly.

With love from us all and hoping soon to hear and see . . .

In a letter of September 15, 1899, Nina Davis thanks Ray for the beautiful photograph she sent her and the letter. She expressed the hope that Ray was having a good time in Munich. It was written on the day after the Day of Atonement and she wondered if Ray attended a fine service.

I went first to an overflow service of poor people where Alfred Adler preached and then I went back with the Adlers to the Bayswater Synagogue for the rest of the day. It's a wonderful day, isn't it? I am sure every religion would be better for containing it.

We were most terribly sorry to leave the Isle of Wight. We still try to keep up the spirit of it (I won't say the atmosphere as you will agree that that is hardly possible in London) by having periodical meetings of those 16 people exclusively who formed our colony at Sandown . . . Mr. Zangwill seems to be working hard at his rehearsals. I should think the play will be a success. I wonder how you felt about the last horror of the Dreyfus case. I heard that when the news of the verdict arrived people here were crying in the streets. It sounds rather unEnglish doesn't it? . . .

With love in which we all join and best wishes for the Festival, yours affectionately.

In a letter dated the 31st of October, Nina Davis wrote that she was glad that the rain gave Ray an opportunity to write and that they have had their full share of wet weather and that

already your friend the fog has paid us several visits . . . Munich must be a delightful place by your description; I wonder if you have yet come to the end of the picture galleries. I was glad to know the name of the artist, the photograph of whose picture you sent me. It must be nice for you to know him in Munich and it is interesting to know the painter of a picture one admires, isn't it? . . .

People are thinking seriously here of forming an associa-

tion somewhat on the lines of the American Jewish Women's Council. As a beginning a reading circle is to be formed for studying the Bible and Jewish History and the first meeting will be on November 26th when Mr. Claude Montefiore will read a paper on Job. I hope the Association will escape the evils you speak of in the American Society. I am not sure if I told you that I am translating Jehudah Halevi's "Ode to Zion."... I have been trying to resist it for a long time and have failed at last...

Mr Oswald Simon is better and began last Sunday to hold a service himself at a hall for those Jews who won't go to Synagogue on Saturday and for those Christians who have ceased believing in Christianity. It is his pet idea of a Missionary Judaism . . . I hear that Mr. Simon preached a splendid sermon.

Mr. Zangwill has returned to look after the production of *The Children of the Ghetto* in London. It seems to have been a great success in America . . .

A letter from a farm in Norfolk (August 17, 1900) contains a description of the ruins of Beeston Abbey, a lovely place to escape to.

One wants a place like that sometimes, does one not?... The animals are very quiet this afternoon; I think the heat has sent them to sleep. It is amusing to listen to them sometimes; but there is one sound which I believe I hate more than any other noise in the world and that is the voice of a pig; I don't think there is anything on earth to beat the essence of degradation expressed by a grunt. I often wonder whether the world wouldn't be better if there were no pigs under the sun to be the symbol of all that is degraded in the life and the type of all that is unkosher in its death.

After holding forth about pigs, Nina Davis decided that she

had better tell a little about people before she comes to the end of Ray's patience if it is not already exhausted. [She tells of] Mr. Oswald Simon and his sisters who are staying quite near us . . . One day he made her read [her essay to

him at the ruin.] He agreed with all except what I said about what seemed to me the Jewish idea concerning an after-life. He wanted me to say I was absolutely sure of an after life. and that it was Jewish to be absolutely sure. But I am not at all satisfied that it is so . . . Do you agree?

Later that year, on December 25th, Miss Davis wrote:

I was very much interested in what you wrote to me about the Jewish idea of an after life. Your feeling seems to me exactly the Jewish one—that it doesn't much matter whether we believe it or not, but we do believe it all the same. In the article of which I told you, I have said very little on the subject.¹²⁶ I cut out a good deal chiefly in consideration of Mr. Simon who seemed hurt at the mere idea of it "not mattering."

As in all Nina Davis' letters it covers many items of interest and ends with "I must really stop or you will wish I had never begun. . . ."

In her letter of June 4, 1901, Nina Davis tells Ray

some great news, which will, I think, surprise you tremendously, I am engaged!!! Unfortunately you do not know the man who has been so blind to his own interests as to choose me. I wish you did, and I hope and trust you will. His name is Dr. Redcliffe Salaman; I believe he is going to be a great doctor, and I think will specialize in nervous diseases. He is not going to practice as there is no need, but he will work hard in original research work.

It all happened very suddenly here while I have been staying (at first quite unsuspecting) with his sister, Mrs. Edward Davis, who married my uncle . . . He is nearly 27.

¹²⁶ See her article, "An Aspect of Judaism," Jewish Quarterly Review (old series), vol. XIII (1900–1901), pp. 241–257. In vol. XII (1899–1900) of the same periodical, Miss Davis had published a translation of Jehudah Halevi's, "Ode to Zion" [pp. 213–216]. On pp. 452–455 of the same volume, Arthur Davis published, "Ben Asher's Rhymes on the Hebrew Accents," which was to be part of a new introduction of his forthcoming re-issue of English by Nina Davis. In 1901, אומרות בלילה להות בלילה Songs of Exile. By Hebrew The Hebrew Accents. The Hebrew text of these rhymes were rendered into Poets, translated by her, appeared in Philadelphia.

I must try and describe him as he is in London this morning, so has no chance of reading this and getting vain. He is a little bit taller than I and very fair, and has very strong regular features and a fine head. I think he has the broadest most open and sympathetic character I have ever known. He is very interested in art and literature and religion, and he loves music; so altogether, don't you think he sounds very nice? . . . Redcliffe would love to know you. With much love and hoping you will give us your approval and blessing.

And so the lovely Nina Davis became Mrs. Redcliffe Salaman.

The correspondence continued but the letters became less and less frequent. The one from Berlin (July 11, 1902) told of a lovely ten days' holiday in the Harz Mountains.

Do you know them? They are most beautiful and perhaps Harzburg, where we stayed, has the finest scenery of all. We went for walks every day, but were otherwise quite lazy and had a glorious time . . . Now I will tell you a secret. In August I expect an event which I daresay you will guess without my telling you any more. We are very excited about it, and are looking forward to the going home all the more because of having something so important to take with us. In October Redcliffe's work in the London Hospital Pathological Institute will commence . . . We have not yet got a house in London which is a little awkward but unless our relatives find a suitable one beforehand we shall stay with my mother-in-law at Mill Hill until we discover one for ourselves . . .

I do not know what is happening to Judaism here [Berlin]—or rather to Jews, for Judaism is safe in spite of them. They seem to have lost all character and all appreciation of the past that they are Jews, and to think only of position. They see no reason why they should not allow themselves to be "getauft" when it is more convenient to call themselves Christians for the sake of getting a post in the University, etc., and as it is practically impossible for a professing

Jew to be promoted in most professions you can imagine the state of things. Of course there are a great many Jews too here who are very different and quite loyal, but the weak minded and "charakterlos" kind are much too evident . . .

I have not done very much work here—only a little original verse and a few translations but I have bought a large edition of the *Midrash Rabba* and am reading through some parts carefully and thinking of making translations of some bits. Have you recovered from the illness you had in Paris? I should think the climate of your native land will quite set you up . . . I hope to hear from you very soon—and with much love and best regards from Redcliffe—also from both of us to Dr. Litman—Yours affectionately.

The next letter came from London (October 15, 1902):

You see we are home again and living with my mother-inlaw until perhaps December when the house we have taken will probably be ready. Now for the news,—on August 2nd our little boy was born. He is such a dear little thing and we are so delighted to have him. We have called him Myer ... He looks very clever for a baby and has the same shaped head as his father . . . We got through all safely (in the journey from Berlin to London) and presented the baby to Redcliffe's old nurse on the very day when 28 years ago she received Redcliffe . . . Redcliffe has started his work at the London Hospital and is working hard.

How glad you must be in your own country and at the idea of your husband beginning work there, and how pleased your people must be. But I hope it won't mean your not paying a visit to England sometimes; I should so enjoy seeing you again, and as you say our husbands ought to know each other. I am quite sure you are right in your estimate of them both . . . As you may imagine, I have not done much work lately but I hope to begin doing something steadily now . . . Myer came to the reception. [after the marriage of her husband's brother to an American girl] and was wonderfully good and looked about at everyone like a grown up man. He is wanting me now so I must say goodbye though I really have not said all I wanted to you . . .

On November 9, 1903, she wrote of the pleasure of having received Ray's letter and having learned that Ray had recovered from her serious illness.

It is delightful that all went so well with you and I am hoping now that when you are quite strong we may some day have the great pleasure of seeing you here again—when your husband has a holiday . . . Your description of your home sounds most beautiful, and it makes me very glad to think how happy you must be.

We are settled now very high up in Hampstead . . . in a house which just suits us. It was the house of Sir Walter Besant, who built it for himself—and is so well thought out and convenient, and we have such a pretty garden.

The letter describes Redcliffe's work and speaks of her having sent to Ray some photographs including one of her husband's.

Don't you like his face very much? But of course I ought not to give an opinion . . . Now I have my request to make. May I have your photograph and your husband's? I always wanted one but was rather shy then about asking. I should be so delighted to have the two now if you can spare them . . .

I have not seen Miss Adler for some time (I think you mean Nettie—I often see the other family). She has for a long time now been specially interested in the question of "wage-earning children" and is considered quite an authority on the subject. I think she is a wonderful woman. Everything she does is so thorough. People who work with her say she is a splendid worker. You may have heard that Mr. Zangwill is engaged to a Miss [Edith] Ayrton—daughter of Professor Ayrton;¹²⁷ her father is a Unitarian—not a Jew. Many people are very upset about it. They think it is especially bad for his cause. He is still speaking a good deal on Zionism and Nationalism but he is not writing much. I was most pleased and flattered at hearing that your circle had

American Jewish Year Book, vol. XXIX (5688 [1927-1928]), pp. 121-143, and in particular, p. 142.

been studying my translations. I still use what time I have for writing and I am now translating into verse some of the poems for the Day of Atonement Service... Some day too I may publish a small volume of original verse. I think being married is quite inspiring, don't you?...

About a year and a half went by before Nina Salaman wrote again, this time from French Switzerland (March 16, 1905):

It seems to me ages and ages since I wrote to you—in fact I can't quite remember when it was, but I know that a great deal happened to me since. I often think of you and wonder how things are going with you and hope for that photograph which you said in your last letter you one day would send me. We have had quite an eventful time. Last April—eleven months ago!—we had little twin boys, so Myer is no longer alone in his glory . . . Their names are Arthur Gabriel and Edward Michael. Myer loves them and has never been a bit jealous. He is now $2\frac{1}{2}$ years old. He has fair curls and dark eyes, and he is very amusing and lively. Our second event is not such a happy one, in fact it is the only unhappy one we have had since we married. My husband's health broke down from overwork in the Hospital . . . besides doing a great deal of outside communal work . . .

The doctor discovered that in addition to

a little pleurisy—his right lung was slightly affected. He said it was an infection from the Pathological Institute which is full of Tubercle Bacilli . . . he advised us to go [abroad] as soon as possible and not to take the children . . . The doctor advised that he should not go back to the Institute even after our return, as it is such unhealthy work, so I think he is likely to go in for Physiology, on which he is very keen, and then he would take no post but work independently. It is a great blessing for us that he is not dependent on his work, though he is so enthusiastic that he has worked much harder than most people who are.

We went for the first three months to Montana—over 5,000 feet high—above Sierra in Valais . . . The air is

spendid and Redcliffe did very well indeed there, and as we had a wonderful amount of sunshine he was able to walk about and sit out on the balcony all day . . . All the time the children have been well. Their nurse is splendid. She has been in the family for years, and I can absolutely trust her, which is wonderfully fortunate . . . A week ago we came here [Grand Hotel du Righi Vaudois] to escape the thaw at Montana . . . We are about 1000 feet above the Lake of Geneva. Redcliffe looks splendid. He has gained 25 lbs. since he was first ill, and he is always in such good spirits. You must be tired of this letter all about ourselves, but I hope you will return my egoism with interest.

There is one more thing I was forgetting to tell you. I am helping with a new translation of the Festival prayers.

... Most of the poems are being put into verse ... Zangwill's are splendid .. I now have three poems before me to do for the New Year Service

Back in England, Nina Salaman wrote on December 9, 1905, that the reason she had waited to reply to Ray's letter of April was that she wanted to have started a settled life again before telling of all their doings.

I was so sorry for so much in your letter—the tragedy of your husband's parents, and your own illness. I hardly like to ask for a letter soon after my long silence, but I should be so happy to know that your recovery continued and that you are now really well and strong. And I do hope too that Mr. Litman's mother recovered from the terrible loss . . .

I can't tell you how I sympathise with you for the bad time you have had, but the more cheerful tone at the end of your letter was a comfort . . .

I must tell you what has happened to us since I last wrote to you. We returned to London on June 1st and found the three little boys well and grown, and we were delighted to be together again. We had then to make our plans. We were very fond of our house at Hampstead, but as the doctor advised my husband not to go back to his work at the

London Hospital it seemed far the most sensible thing to take a house in the country . . . While searching about in our motor car, we all stayed at a farm house about 25 miles from London. In October we discovered this house and fell in love with it at first sight . . . We have been here a month now and are very pleased with the house and garden and the country round. We are only 14 miles from Cambridge which is a great advantage for Redcliffe. Part of the house is 300 years old and the new part is quite in character. I think the life and air will suit Redcliffe splendidly. He is very well and he looks better than he ever did before he was ill . . .

The last part of the letter tells of the children, of the people in the neighborhood who all seem to be very friendly and kind, of her still working with others at the new translation of the *Mahzor*.¹²⁸

The letter of January 14, 1906, expressed sympathy on the death of Ray's father.

I know well how irreparable such a loss is. But you have the great comfort of knowing that your dear father's life was a full and complete one, and that he lived a good old age . . . What a blessing it is (isn't it?) to be able to think of one's father with love and honor . . .

A letter of June 4, 1906, refers to the San Francisco earthquake and fire as "the appalling events in your beautiful city" and expresses gratitude that Ray and all her people were safe and well.

It must have been a wonderful and terrible time to go through. I think you must have a great love for the place to continue living there, to start again—the next moment it seems, building up again, when there is always the possibility of the earth opening its mouth again under your feet. You must be all very brave and devoted . . .

¹²⁸ She wrote:

The two volumes for the Day of Atonement are published and well criticised . . . I wonder if it will be known at all in America.

I must tell you our own news now though some of it is very sad. In April we had a fourth son [Raphael], strong and well and healthy but the satisfaction of this event was shadowed by my father having died a fortnight before on the first day of Passover . . . It seemed so sudden at the end and it was a dreadful grief to me that, as I was expecting my baby so soon, I could not go to him to see him again. Redcliffe went down to see him when it seemed so serious, but just arrived too late. Wasn't it hard? He was only 59. Before he died he had practically finished his life-work—a new English translation of the Festival Prayer Book . . .

The rest of the letter tells about the four little boys and the difficulty of finding a good nurse.

Four children all almost babies are such a handful. Redcliffe enjoys the life here. He has always some research work to do . . .

I do not find any letters from Nina Salaman for the period between June, 1906 and March, 1911.

On March 6, 1911, Nina Salaman wrote:

I know you will not think I have forgotten or have not wanted to write to you, so I will not apologise for the time that passed since your very welcome letter came, but only tell you that every day is so full that the *real* letters which I want to write seem to get neglected for the necessary little everyday notes. I have thought of you so often and wondered what you are doing and thinking. It was a surprise to see that you had left California, and in one way a pleasure, as it makes one think you may feel inclined to come over some time now that you are so much nearer. I was very sorry that you had been so ill again, but hope that the surgeon's prophecy has come true, and that you are really quite well and strong this time . . .

Our baby is now nearly a year and 9 months old. She is very fair, and so good tempered and jolly looking. I enclose a little photograph of Myer as he is now. He is growing so tall and really is an interesting child with a lot of intelligence. I still teach him Hebrew every day and he is very

fond of it, and is getting on well with translating the Pentateuch. The twins too have a lesson every day and read pretty well and talk a little. Myer is, I think, musical and he sings really sweetly . . . There is really so much to say about them all—but I hope one day you will get to know them yourself . . .

On October 14, 1912, Nina Salaman wrote:

I have very often thought of you and wished we could meet and talk instead of writing—and that so seldom. I was so interested in what you said about specializing on Jewish matters. Please do not think you ever bore me when you write of these. Both Redcliffe and I are more and more drawn towards these complicated problems, in fact, if it were not for the fascination of his scientific work, I think Redcliffe would give himself up to Jewish matters entirely. As it is we often find ourselves talking of little else for days. I suppose we have what I believe Dr. Joseph Jacobs calls "the capital J. disease." Jewish problems in England alone just now are enough to keep one's mind fully occupied —particularly our failure to find a Chief Rabbi since Dr. Adler died. Things are in a bad state now as the two candidates selected by the United Synagogue are both unsuitable and unpopular. No one knows what is going to happen. Affairs in Russia affect us very deeply, and we are very angry with our 17 members of Parliament because not one of them has raised his voice in accusation of Russia's cruelty all through this wretched business of the alliance with Russia. I quite understand and sympathise with you when you say that sometimes the vastness of this complicated Jewish problem makes one feel discouraged . . . [Oct. 16th] . . . I took a little part last spring in getting up the English protest against the horrible "Blood Accusation." A splendid list of signatures was secured from English Christians at the head of all the various professions. I fear so far, the only result has been the indefinite postponement of the trial and the continued imprisonment of [Mendel] Beilis . . . Through August and half of September we were with the children at the sea-three miles from where Mr. Zangwill lives. We were with him and his wife a great deal

and enjoyed the time immensely. One has to see him often and in his home to realize what sacrifices he makes and how he works and wears himself out to do some good for poor Jews. Everything Jewish affects him intensely, and it astonishes me to find how little he is understood by Jews themselves . . .

On January 30, 1914, in reply to a letter of condolence written by Ray on the death of Edward, the twin brother of Arthur, Nina wrote:

It was indeed a help and a consolation to me to have your sweet letter so full of sympathy for us in our heavy loss. We have both found that at such times as this kindness like yours is really needed and deeply appreciated. It was a very hard blow and fearfully sudden. One somehow does not realize that death can come to one's own children, and that seems to make the task of submission and endurance all the harder . . .

Your reminder of the mutual attraction you and I felt for one another since we first met, touches me very much. I certainly felt from the first moment I set eyes on you, how alike our aspirations must be, and I soon found that I was not mistaken, and that in some mysterious way we shared our ideals and hopes. I was rejoiced when happiness came to you as well as to me. May it always remain with you! And for me—with all the blessings I have left, I tell myself that, as you say, life must have of necessity some shadows. How often have I said to myself lately the words of Job: "Shall we accept good from God, and shall we not also accept evil?" And how are we to know what is good and what is evil? We can only hope . . .

There is again a gap, this time of about five and a half years, in the correspondence. On June 9, 1920, Nina Salaman wrote:

It was such a great pleasure to hear from you. All the time I have often thought and wondered about you, and just as it was with you, all sorts of duties delayed my writing, although I often blamed myself for letting the time

pass without a word to you. However, now that you have broken the silence I hope our conversations will go on at shorter intervals. I don't know even whether I told you about my husband being away with the army all through the war, and spending the last year in Palestine as medical officer to the Judeans. There the Jewish colonies aroused his greatest enthusiasm and Zionism now takes up a great part of his thought and time—though he still works hard at his research work as well. The Herbert Samuel family all seem very happy at the idea of going out to Palestine. They are very good friends and we shall miss them dreadfully. We feel for ourselves it is not the time to go out with the children at present, but may consider it in the future. I wonder if you have thought about going out to the Hebrew University?

I struggled through with all the responsibilities of wartime pretty well, but the relief of Redcliffe's return was enormous. The five children (the youngest born in the war year, but "pre-war material" one of the boys said) are all well and happy. Last March I was very ill—first a miscarriage and then a rather severe operation—but I am now very nearly strong again . . .

The letter of November 3, 1920, tells of Prof. Jacob Zeitlin's visit, whom they liked and wished that they could have seen more of him.

[Myer] is now 18! and very tall—and people say good-looking. He has just left school, and before going up to Cambridge, he has gone to Oxford for some classical coaching and extra Hebrew . . . Arthur and Raphael are still at school and doing well—Raphael being extraordinarily popular, and Ruth and Esther have a governess at home . . .

I am glad you feel hopeful, as we do, about the [Sir Herbert] Samuel regime in Palestine. We are very fond of the whole family, including Hadassa, the Palestinian girl to whom the eldest boy is engaged . . . I hardly think the anti-Semitism here is very serious. We have not come across it, except in some of the papers, and I doubt if people pay much attention to them. I think the majority of the English

people really look at Palestine as the natural home of the Jews, but I don't fancy there is any general desire to send us all off there.

Redcliffe continues his research into [the] racial Jewish question, and he hopes to write a book about it some day. A small volume, a part of his letters to me from Palestine, will be published shortly under the title *Palestine Reclaimed*. Yehuda Halevi goes on very slowly. I get very little time for work, but am always hoping for more . . .

As usual, the letter ends with expression of love and best wishes from "Yours Affectionately—."

The last letter of Nina Salaman was dated September 19, 1924:

My letter cannot attain the length and great interest of yours, for I still am not strong and cannot do much in any direction Otherwise all is well with us. The family has, I think, had a very happy vacation with much variety, and many friends backwards and forwards . . .

I was very interested also in what you told me of the Hillel Foundation. It is a splendid feat to have achieved. It was a satisfaction to me to be able to tell Zangwill what you said about his visit. He seems to have spoken very fearlessly. All the same, I think his reception on the part of some people has caused him a good deal of worry; at all events he has been suffering lately from a long attack of insomnia and has not felt well enough to do much work, but I think he is improving. Dr. [Israel] Abrahams, as you probably know, has been on two lecturing visits to your country, both this year and last. He seems to have been very happy in America, particularly the last time when his daughter was with him and was given a splendid time by your hospitable countrymen . . .

Redcliffe Nathan Salaman was the author of *Heredity and the Jew* (Cambridge, Eng. [1911]).

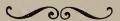
with an introduction by the Hon. W. Ormsby Gore (London [1920]). Dr. Salaman published an article in the London Contemporary Review, May, 1920, entitled "The Prospects of Jewish Colonization in Palestine," which also was reprinted.

I shall look forward some day to hearing your opinion of Songs of Many Days.¹³¹ Since then I have published a tiny book (representing the sixth Arthur Davis lecture) entitled "Rahel Morpurgo and Contemporary Hebrew Poets in Italy."¹³²...

Having the children at home gives me much to do and also much amusement and pleasure, although now that the two older boys are at Cambridge I see a good deal of them in term also. I think I could not have told you that a little over a year ago my mother died. I know you will be sorry. We miss her very much, naturally, and so do the children.

I must not write more now as it is so late, but will only send you much love and very best wishes from us both for the coming New Year.

"There has been a movement started here"



When speaking of friends whom Ray made in London, I quoted from some letters of Nettie Adler's. I am adding excerpts from one she sent to Ray on January 26, 1899:

It is just lovely to think of you growing comfortably fat. I quite hope that when you come amongst us again we shall no longer recognize the etherial being, all soul and lambent fire, who seemed to be gradually disappearing before our eyes.

I thought that if you could obtain a soothing environment you would probably be able to work in Frankfurt. One can be more quiet in a foreign city—continental I should have said, than in London. One's ideas in London come almost too rapidly. I think, the colours of life are so varied there

¹⁵¹ Published in London, 1923.

Published in London, 1923, by the Jewish Historical Society of England. She also edited a children's book, Apples and Honey [(Garden City, N. Y. and Toronto, 1921) and (New York, 1927)]. The Jewish Publication Society of America published her English translation of Selected Poems of Jehudah Halevi, chiefly from a critical text edited by Heinrich Brody (Philadelphia, 1925).

¹³³ See *supra*, pp. 65-66.

one seems to live more than to think. Each thought seems to become an experience, part of oneself, and then one cannot so easily make it articulate. I believe too many ideas are almost as fatal to original work as too few. It sounds paradoxical but I believe it to be true. That is why the quieter existence—duller than London—suits you now so much better.

But you must come back in the season and rejoice in our sunshine, our May and our lilacs. London is the most delightful, most distracting and most fascinating city in June. I always feel then that I wore "Paquin" gowns and "Louise" hats and that I went to three dances and four receptions every night . . . But instead of that one usually has [a] Country Holiday Friend visiting and more work than usual.

The letter of December 27, 1899, was written at the time of the Boer War and states that

Life in London at the present is distinctly sombre. So many people have gone or are going to the War. Ever so many of our friends have volunteered . . . We think and speak of nothing but the War. No dances are being given, the theatres are far from crowded and the only entertainments that are well patronized are those in aid of the War funds. Your countrymen and women have been helping grandly and the feeling towards America which has been growing warmer and far more friendly is strengthened by much gratitude . . .

There has been a movement started here for organizing study circles after the plan of the American Council of Jewish Women. Some weeks ago a meeting was held at Mrs. Ernest Franklin's, when Mr. Montefiore gave a most interesting paper on Job . . . I don't quite know whether the movement will "take" . . . The idea is that there shall be small study circles in different parts of London and large quarterly gatherings at which some well known scholar should speak on the work carried on by the circles during the past weeks. A syllabus of suggested study would be published at the beginning of each year . . .

In a letter of December 15, 1900, parts of which are

quoted above,¹³⁴ Miss Adler spoke about her interest in Ray's visit in Zurich.

One has heard so much of the exiled Polish and Russian women studying there and much that is good of their hard work and self denial, and much that is less creditable to their ideals of high-minded womanhood. I wonder if these rumors are true. I wish that they were not. It is so sad to think that women who have fought for freedom intellectual, should misconstrue the meaning of the truest freedom when once it is won . . .

Oh dear! What a blessing work is and how blessed we women are, who though we may spend our lives alone can yet keep our ideals intact and can be satisfied with nothing but what responds to our hunger for the highest. If we spend our lives alone, at least we keep our self-respect and, I don't think that with work, one is alone. But after all one is so horribly human. But how foolish I am—it is not horrible at all—but beautiful, and if life isn't "moontints of purple and pearl," it is something much better still,—"a gift of tears" and laughter too. And those who have the fairy garden will never grow old—just like the princess in the tale . . . Please be kind and write soon.

In the following spring, on April 2, 1901, Miss Adler wrote:

I was so glad to receive your letter breathing as it did so much friendship and kindness, quite undeserved, I fear. I felt quite happy to find that you are on the way to regard me less and less as an acquaintance and I begin [to] hope that you will soon find it in your heart to forget formality and to address me as an old friend.

Is there any chance of our having the pleasure of welcoming you again?... It would be so good to see you again and to have at least one splendid intimate talk.

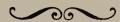
Do you know I feel that our friendship despite your long absence has not waned. It seems as if I had grown to know you still better from your letters. It has been a great pleasure to have your sympathetic words . . .

¹³⁴ See *supra*, p. 66.

Life has been a great rush for the past six weeks. I was asked to take on the Hon. Secretaryship of a Committee which has for its object the limitation of the hours during which children work for wages out of school hours. The question has been taken up by the Government and my committee were asked to furnish a number of statistics to the Departmental Enquiry. This meant hundreds of letters, the receipt of over a thousand schedules and the tabulation of 7000 cases . . . One had to work terribly long hours to get finished in time. I dare not tell you how late or rather how early the next morning . . .

I have just been enjoying some charming essays by one of your countrymen, the great psychologist, William James, called "Talks to Teachers." Of course, you know the book. I try to take his monitions to heart, but existence is one big scurry. Goodbye, dear.

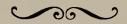
"The Industrial work is growing apace"



Amongst other letters I find one from Lily H. Montagu, who wrote on March 24, 1901:

I was very pleased to hear from you. It is so nice to be remembered by fellow workers who are struggling to realize God in the World—just as I am struggling. I am much immersed in work of all kinds. My little book Naomi's Exodus is out . . . If you ever come across it I shall be so glad to know if you think it real. It has brought me many kind letters and encouraging reviews but I know well its many shortcomings. Then I have brought out a little hymnbook for my children's services primarily. Mr. Montefiore has adopted it at his services on Berkeley Street. Then our Club continues to grow and the girls come nearer to us and show themselves more and more lovable. Our dreams about lodging house and seaside hotel are being realized. We have seen houses for both and the money must be forthcoming as the need is there. Then the Industrial work is growing apace more Club leaders are beginning to realise their responsibilities. Next week I am to speak to the Young Women's Christian Association and this gives me an opportunity to say some of the things I want most to say. You know how these opportunities stir one up and make one feel humble. I am so glad that you have kept well. I am so sorry to hear from you that the dreaded indifference does come to the persecuted when they feel free to think about the truths they once accepted without thought. Of course the call will come to them in time and if you can do something to prepare the soil you will be doing most noble work. I feel with you that horrible waste of time which comes because people won't show themselves as they are to one another but build a kind of fence around themselves and invite those interested to peek through . . . I hope we shall meet again this summer.

"Because you are so good to me"



One of the friends of Ray was Annie Frances Briggs (later Mrs. George Lane), a pupil of Keith who "esteemed her highly for her sincere and amiable personality and for her talent." Miss Briggs' high regard for Ray is manifested in the letter which she wrote while Ray was in London and when she was preparing to go there. Apparently there was some thought that on her crossing to Europe Ray was a passenger on the steamer *La Bourgogne* which went down. On July 29, 1898, Miss Briggs wrote:

For ten days this summer there was the dreadful fear that never again should any of us hear your voice nor see your dear face—at least in this world. We were on the ranch and the first papers received did not contain the complete list of passengers. What a contrast was your delightful passage!

It was a lengthy and chatty letter which Miss Briggs wrote, brimming with enthusiastic anticipation of her forthcoming trip to Europe.

^{134a} Brother Cornelius Fidelis [Herman Emanuel Braeg], Keith, Old Master of California (New York, 1942), p. 185.

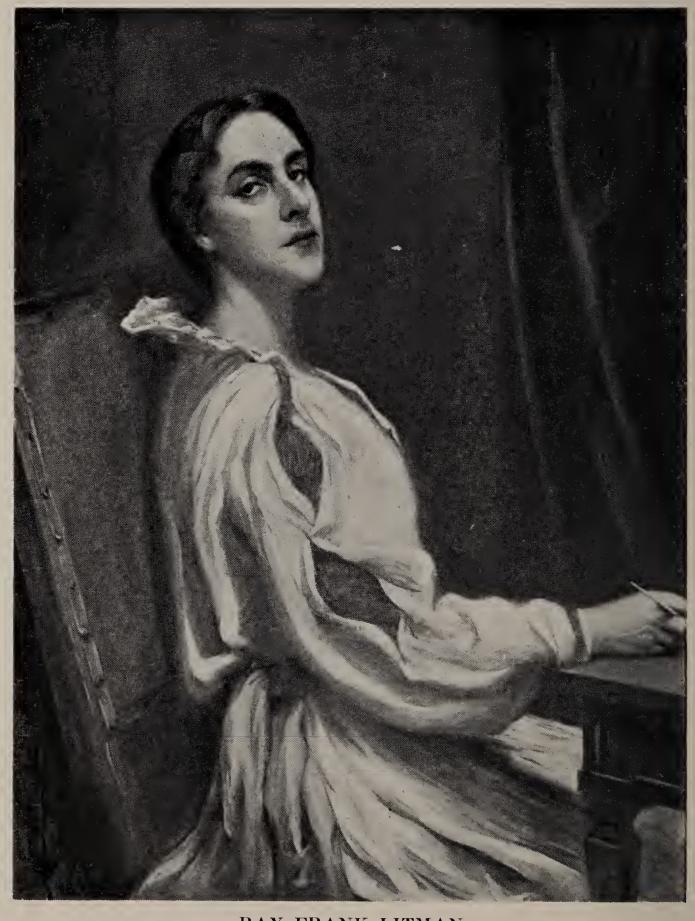
I never dreamed they [she was referring to her parents] would have so little anxiety about me going out into the world. But that is because you are so good to me . . . Mr. Keith often speaks of you most kindly and feels quite differently about my going now that he knows I am to be with you.



AFTER WE MET



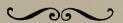




RAY FRANK LITMAN
(From a painting by Lautenschlager, Munich, 1900)

III

"She expressed herself frankly and freely"



It was the Dreyfus trial that brought us together. In the early summer of 1899, I was passing through Munich on my way to Russia to see my parents before enrolling in the University of Munich to pursue studies with the object of obtaining a doctor's degree. On the advice of Dr. Joseph Goldstein, then a privatdozent in Zurich, later one of the well known Russian economists, I chose Professors Lujo Brentano and Walter Lotz as the men to guide me in the field of economics and Pension Quistorp as a place in which to stay.

I came from Paris when the dinner in the pension was in progress and was assigned a seat across the table from two young ladies whose conversation attracted my attention. They discussed the situation in France and one of them said in a well modulated voice which carried, though she tried to speak very softly: "I wish I knew more of what is going on there." "Excuse me for intruding," I said, "but I believe that I can satisfy your curiosity as I just left the city of lights darkened by recent regrettable events." "Curiosity is

hardly the word to use," said the young lady from across the table, who as I learned later was Ray Frank, "I am really greatly perturbed by the happenings in Paris and am most anxious to learn about conditions there beyond what one reads in the papers."

"Curiosity" was hardly a well chosen word to use in the case of the serious looking young women whose questioning eyes, sensitive mouth and facial expression in general betokened intellectual power. I decided then and there to be more careful in the use of my language.

When the dinner was over everyone left the room except Ray Frank and I. We stationed ourselves at the threshold between the living room and the dining room. Why we did not sit down I cannot say; perhaps we were too tense. We stood for a long time, Ray plying me with questions, I answering to the best of my ability. I told her of many of my experiences during the two years sojourn in Paris, of my attempts to concentrate on studies in an atmosphere surcharged with strife, with charges and countercharges, with violent demonstrations against Dreyfus and the Jews. I told her of the electrifying effect which Émile Zola's J'Accuse produced on all right minded people who were attacking prejudice and fighting valiantly against seemingly unsurmountable odds in order to bring about the triumph of justice, the establishment of the innocence of the unjustly accused man.

Upon my return from Russia to Munich I found Ray and her friend, Sophie Rosenthal, a gifted violinist, where I had left them—in Pension Quistorp. It was easy to perceive that Ray was the dominant spirit in their relationship, also that she was far above the general run of persons to be found in a boarding house.

As I watched her and it was difficult, at least for me, not to watch her, she impressed me as one who has been recovering from a breakdown, breakdown from what I could not tell. Of her work on the Pacific Coast and of her achievements before she crossed the Atlantic Ocean, I was not aware. And as I studied her, it seemed to me that there were many Rays united in one. There was a Ray with a solemn, almost tragic expression on her face, a Ray absorbed in deep thoughts to the extent of not knowing what was going on around her, and a Ray, smiling, solicitous and tender, ready to listen and willing to help; there was a Ray full of questions, with a mind desirous to learn and a heart to understand, and a Ray not listening but domineering the conversation, talking eloquently, convincingly, compelling undivided attention of all within the reach of her voice; there was a Ray who could enter with zest into the spirit and fun of a carefree party and a Ray withdrawn into herself wishing nothing better than to be left alone, a Ray who seemed weary and disillusioned.

A person of definite likes and dislikes, she expressed herself frankly and freely on any question which presented itself and whether one agreed or disagreed with her, of one thing one could be certain, all that she said or did was always inspired by a search, an uncompromising search for what she considered was just and true, merciful and good.

Describing Ray's looks when she arrived in London in 1898, one writer tells us:

Imagine a tall dark young woman with a delicate oval face, straight regular features and plainly parted hair. Her high forehead and finely shaped head betoken intellectual power. When she speaks her dark eyes light up with intense earnestness. She has a mobile mouth, expressive of sympathy, and sensitive nostrils which would indicate the possession of an artistic temperament.¹³⁵

What impressed me especially when I met Ray were her dark, eloquent questioning eyes, her mobile, often quivering mouth, as if she could not keep from expressing what animated her at the time, her pre-eminently dignified countenance, and her voice musical and full of sympathy.

It was music that started us on the road of better knowing each other. There was a piano in my room and often when I sat down to play, I was interrupted by Miss Frank who would come in to tell me that, according to Miss Sophie Rosenthal, I was repeatedly making the same mistake in a Chopin's nocturne or valse or in some other composition. "It is fine to be carried away by one's emotions and to carry others along with you, but why not play correctly?" was the burden of Ray's remarks. I knew that she was right, but my vanity was hurt and I would tell her that if a false note disturbed her talented companion, there was no reason why she should listen.

We had many other arguments, as we did not see eye to eye on a number of topics, but we respected each other's intellectual integrity. Ray was intensely Jewish while I was more or less indifferent to the precepts and tenets of Judaism. Ray took it upon herself to change my attitude, to bring me into the fold of what she conceived to be enlightened Judaism.

It soon became apparent to me that Ray, in addition to being versed in Jewish law and Jewish lore, knew a great deal about art, particularly the art of painting and sculpture. One of the purposes of her coming to Europe was to deepen that knowledge by attending

¹³⁵ Young Israel (London), April, 1899, pp. 23-25.

lectures and by visiting galleries and museums where objects of art were exhibited. In crisp winter days we used to go to the two famous art galleries of Munich and it was a revelation to listen to Ray's remarks as we stopped before a Rembrandt or Rubens or Böcklin. She went far beyond the discussion of lines and colors and the technique of the composition; her remarks touched upon the divine spark which made the artist paint the way he did, and the same spark would illuminate the face of Ray as she would bring out in a language full of imagery the beauty, the indestructible value of the canvas.

Ray spoke seldom of her work on the Pacific Coast where she had left many friends and admirers, she hardly ever spoke of herself, and now after our long life together there are a number of events in her career which are not clearly delineated in my mind and for the reconstruction of which I had to rely on newspaper and magazine articles and on letters.

Ray spoke rarely about herself, but with what fluency and clarity and, if need be force, could she speak on other matters. I shall never forget what the nurses told me in the Peoria Sanatorium where she spent the last few months of her life. She was physically decrepit, mentally confused, and yet the nurses loved to be with her because when she spoke she "used such beautiful English." Yes, Ray used a beautiful English, she had a wonderful command of words which, as long as she was well, she marshalled in such a way as to bring before her listeners her erudition, her views, her ideals and ideas. Ray's magnetism may be partly accounted for by the rich, melodic, well-modulated voice which, when she spoke, arrested the attention of those within her reach and made them realize that before them was a warm, noble, sympathetic personality.

Almost from the first days of my stay in the pension Ray began to manifest an interest in my welfare. One form of it was not especially appreciated by me at the time. My place at the dinner table was next to hers. She used to see to it that my plate was provided with more vegetables than I had a desire to consume. Vegetables were not my favorite dish and I disliked especially some of those which were served in the pension, but according to Ray, it was immaterial whether I liked them or not, they were one of the necessary parts of my daily diet, and that was that. It was when I showed any signs of illness that Ray was most helpful. She knew what to do and her ministrations usually brought me back to normal in comparatively short time.

My dissertation, "Die Möglichkeit der Lohnsteigerungen und die Lohnfundstheorien," for the doctor's degree which I started under Professor Lujo Brentano dealt with wage fund theories; Brentano was well satisfied with my progress, but I soon found out that I would not be able to obtain my degree from the University of Munich; in order to do so one had to be a graduate of a Gymnasium; as a holder of a degree from a School of Commerce, I did not qualify. Brentano's recommendation to the Bavarian Minister of Public Instruction that the rule be waived in my case was of no avail. A rule is a rule. And so Brentano suggested my transferring to Zurich where I could continue the work under Professor Herkner, one of his pupils and an authority on labor problems. I did so.

Ray went back to London, but she did not stay there very long. She decided to come to Zurich, to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Swiss Alps, to breathe the refreshing air of the mountainous country, and perhaps

also to be nearer to the student of economics at the University of Zurich.

In the winter semester 1900-1901 Ray attended the Zurich Polytechnikum listening to lectures on Goethe's Faust and on the Renaissance and Reformation. She also enrolled in Herkner's course on economics—I said enrolled as her attendance at his lectures was rather irregular. While possessed of a great amount of knowledge Professor Herkner was not an inspiring lecturer and Ray preferred staying away and doing something more interesting than sitting through his talks.

We made a number of excursions out of Zurich—to Spitz, to Lucerne and Interlaken, to Basle and to Bern; Ray's presence made my stay in Switzerland more pleasant than it would have been otherwise but it was not conducive to an undivided attention to my graduate work. We had so many things to talk about, quite a few differences of opinion to iron out; our discussions proceeded sometimes not very smoothly, but they were patched up quickly and I think we learned to know each other better than it would have been the case otherwise.

After my graduation, Ray and I were married in London, on August 14, 1901, and went to live in a three-room furnished apartment close to the Place de l'Étoile, in Paris. It was evident that no reputable interior decorator had a hand in fixing the rooms and it took ingenuity and much labor on the part of Ray to make the place more or less attractive. One of the sources of her despair was the kitchen which lacked a number of conveniences to be found in the United States and whose heavy copper pots, pans and kettles, while attractive to look at, were heavy to handle and hard to keep clean. Due to the slimness of our financial

resources eating in restaurants was a rare occurrence; this was not to be regretted as Ray's cooking was much superior to that to be found in places which were within our means.

Part of Ray's time was spent in conquering, with my assistance, the intricacies of every-day French so as to make herself understood by the concierge, the grocer, the milkman and the laundress; she drew the line on butchers and it fell to me to converse with them, sometimes not very amiably. Friday nights were especially festive occasions. Candles were lit, proper prayers said and usually a somewhat more elaborate meal served.

Our relaxation consisted in strolling on the gay and not so gay streets of Paris, avoiding the latter as much as possible. There were many interesting sights to see. In the shopping districts Ray enjoyed stopping before the windows where articles of style, fashion and craftmanship were displayed; for obvious reasons seldom entering the stores, however attractive the articles may have been. We attended some performances of the Grand Opera, the Opéra Comique and the Comédie Française; not as many as we would have liked, and when we went we were usually amongst the "higher ups" where in addition to watching the performance we could look down upon those who paid for the privilege of occupying better seats. We were frequent visitors in the Louvre and the Luxembourg Museum, and spent many an hour feasting our eyes on the beautiful flowers in the gardens close to these famous museums.

Unfortunately, soon after our coming to Paris, Ray's throat began to give her much trouble. We went to one of the best known throat specialists, who diagnosed her disease correctly. He proceeded to treat it, however, with more consideration for his pocket-book than for

the relief of the ailment. We stood it for some time returning again and again to his office, but finally had to give it up. We found another physician, who was not so famous, but who proved to be more helpful.

I shall pass briefly over my activities in Paris, my work as a translator, my brief connection with the then newly established Russian School of Social Sciences and my unsuccessful attempts to break through the wall of extreme French nationalism in order to find a place on the faculty of some institution of higher learning in France.

As the prospects of my getting something worthwhile seemed very dim we decided to go to the United States where, as both Ray and I felt, it would be easier for me to start on a career for which I had prepared myself, that of a university professor. We decided to go to California. Soon after our arrival in Oakland, the Jewish community there gave a reception in which Ray was eulogized for her past achievements. As to her husband, he was accepted by the members of the Oakland society, but hardly with open arms. Some friends were disappointed that Ray who left the country with a halo over her head had returned without any tangible results of her conquests in Europe. What had the Western celebrity been doing there? She did not even marry a man of great renown, but an obscure young man who had yet to make his way in the world of scholars.

It was imperative for me to find some work. The first man I went to see was David Starr Jordan, the President of Stanford University. He knew Ray Frank Litman as an able lecturer and student of philosophy. I had come provided with high recommendations from a number of French social scientists and publicists. Dr. Jordan had no hesitation in offering me a position. It was, of all the places, in the Department of Philosophy where they were looking for a man. Could I qualify? My studies were outside of this field and I told this to President Jordan. He then suggested that I should come to give talks once or twice a week on economic topics, until a place would be found for me in the Economics Department.

My next step was to see Professor Adolph C. Miller at the University of California, in Berkeley. He was organizing a new department, separate from that of history and kindred disciplines where economics was taught heretofore. Professor Miller was interested in establishing courses in commerce and industry. Could I undertake the work? Here my knowledge was also somewhat deficient, but I realized that it was either this or nothing. Nothing was out of the question, and so I decided to accept the offer. After all, I told to myself, it was more within my reach than plunging into the intricacies of philosophical speculations. And so my academic career started in the second semester of 1902-1903, when, as I learned later, I became one of the pioneers in teaching marketing and merchandizing in the colleges of the United States. It was not easy to give courses for which there were no text books nor much other literature in the English language. A few German books dealing with Handel and Handelspolitik helped me to outline my work and a few elementary treatises dealing with business forms and documents were used by me at the beginning in order to familiarize the students with activities leading to the employment of documents and with the functions performed by each. It was a roundabout method, but it worked fairly well. Most fortunate was the fact that I found

my students interested and co-operative. In Ray, I had a valuable assistant.

We rented a house on Warring Street within walking distance of the University campus. It became the center of Ray's activities. While she accepted a few invitations to speak, she did not enter fully into her former public life.

There was much work to be done in and around the house; weeds to remove and flowers to plant in the front, vegetables to raise in the back. The inside needed painting and decorating. A number of cherry trees and a pear tree were on the lot which satisfied our craving for fresh fruit when in season and yielded many quarts of luscious black and Royal Ann cherries and Bartlett pears for future consumption.

My salary was twelve hundred dollars a year; a dollar was a dollar at that time in fact as well as in name, but even with the best of intentions it could not be stretched too far. I remember how on a few occasions, in order to save carfare, we walked from our place to Castro Street in Oakland where Ray's relatives lived—a distance of several miles. As both of us loved walking we did not mind the exercise.

We seldom went visiting and had few visitors. One of the most welcome of these was Professor Wesley C. Mitchell who joined the faculty of the University at the same time as I did. He was very modest, but one had to know him but a short time to realize that back of his reserve was a keen mind and a great reservoir of knowledge. It was good to see him relax in our home, where he found both in Ray and in me a responsive chord to what he was trying to do. Mitchell and I became good friends; I surmise that he was one of those

whose recommendation in addition to that of Professor Miller was responsible for my call to Illinois in 1908.

One of the families we became well acquainted with was the Lehmers. Professor Derrick Norman Lehmer, an able mathematician, was married to Mitchell's sister. What attracted us to the home of Lehmers was the fact that they were a musically gifted family, and many a pleasant hour was spent by Ray and me listening to his and his children's performances.

A few times we went to the Greek Theatre; two events there stand out most prominently in my mind, events which were thoroughly enjoyed by Ray; one was an extravaganza staged by the students, an elaborate and witty affair, and the other "L'Aiglon" with Maude Adams in the title role. With star-studded skies above, in an atmosphere of suspense, Maude Adams was superb as a young ill-fated son of the Great Emperor. It was an inspired performance.

Notwithstanding the slimness of our resources Ray insisted on my joining the Faculty Club, of which I became one of the charter members.

And so our life moved along at a more or less even keel, I bending my efforts to make a success of my teaching and doing some writing, Ray helping me in my work, keeping house, giving occasional talks and having a few of her articles accepted by the Sunday edition of the San Francisco Chronicle. The articles dealt with such topics as "The Stock Exchanges," "How they do laundering in different parts of the world," "A builder of houses in Berkeley." From the contemplation of the beauties of nature and art, from the appraisal of the work of prophets and sages, Ray now plunged into the world of industry and commerce, of every day life. Such was the effect of the association

with an economist. She drew upon her personal experiences supplemented by what one may loosely call "research."

One of the addresses Ray delivered was before the Oakland section of the Council of Jewish Women. She spoke of "The Position of the Jewish Woman in Modern Jewry," and expressed the thought that Jewish women exhibited more or less the same traits as the majority of the women in the lands in which they lived. Thus in Germany, they were chiefly housewives, while in England a number of them were devoting their time and effort to social service. She emphasized the fact that recognition cannot be obtained because of the greatness of some of their ancestors but that the modern Jewess with the same responsibilities and in the main with the same opportunities as other women has to justify her place in society by the uprightness of her character and by her devotion to high principles as enunciated by her faith. Jewish women must show that they have not lost their courage and their aspirations; they have before them the task of instilling into their children standards of honor transmitted to them by the records of their past sufferings and achievements in the face of adversity. Not foreseeing the two catastrophic world-wars and the emergence of cruel totalitarian regimes she envisaged the world as moving surely if slowly to a mutual understanding based on common interests and "insofar as the Jew shall help to obtain this aim insofar will mankind testify its appreciation."

On March 1, 1908, there came a letter from Dr. David Kinley informing me that there was an opening in the Department of Economics at the University of Illinois and as I was recommended for the position, he

wanted me, if interested, to send him relevant data about myself.

I was definitely interested, ready to leave Berkeley, realizing that my advancement there would be slow; in addition there was the desire to get nearer to the industrial and political centers of the country. A contributing factor was the realization of the fact that Ray was not happy in California. It irked her that, according to her, I was not sufficiently appreciated by the authorities at the University. As to her own position, it differed from the time when she was at the height of her career and when prominent members of the Jewish society in San Francisco were eager to open their salons to her as a lecturer so that they could bask in the reflected glory of a unique personality as her patrons and patronesses. She did not perceive this at the time and if there was anything that Ray resented it was being patronized.

After I accepted the call to Illinois, we were confronted with the problem of disposing of our Warring Street home. It was quite a problem as it coincided with a slump in the Berkeley real estate market and no property had been sold for a number of months. It looked for a while as if I would have to go to Urbana alone leaving Ray to grapple with the problem. We finally succeeded in our sales efforts due largely to Ray's keeping the place in a ship-shape condition and her sales ability. No real estate man could have done any better.

The house was sold only a few weeks before we had to leave for the Midwest. The next step was to sell most of the furniture. Ray very wisely did not dismantle the attractive looking place until it found a buyer. After that came the shipment of books and other per-

sonal effects to Illinois, the final glimpse of the Berkeley hills and of San Francisco Bay and the farewell to the family.

I wondered how Ray, a Californian, would react to the flat country of central Illinois. To me, whose childhood and adolescent years were spent in the Ukraine, prairies were a familiar sight. They were similar to the Russian steppes. For Ray to be in a land of unobstructed horizons was a novel experience, but she easily adjusted herself to it and used to say that she saw much beauty in a landscape which unfolded itself as far as human eye could see.

There was only one house for rent in Champaign and Urbana when we arrived, and we were told that unless we act promptly it may be gone also. There was nothing to do but to act as advised. The house stood on an unpaved street close to the campus; there were many such streets when we came to the twin cities. On one occasion our attempt to cross University Avenue was highlighted by Ray losing one of her rubbers in the deep mud,—we were not able to retrieve it.

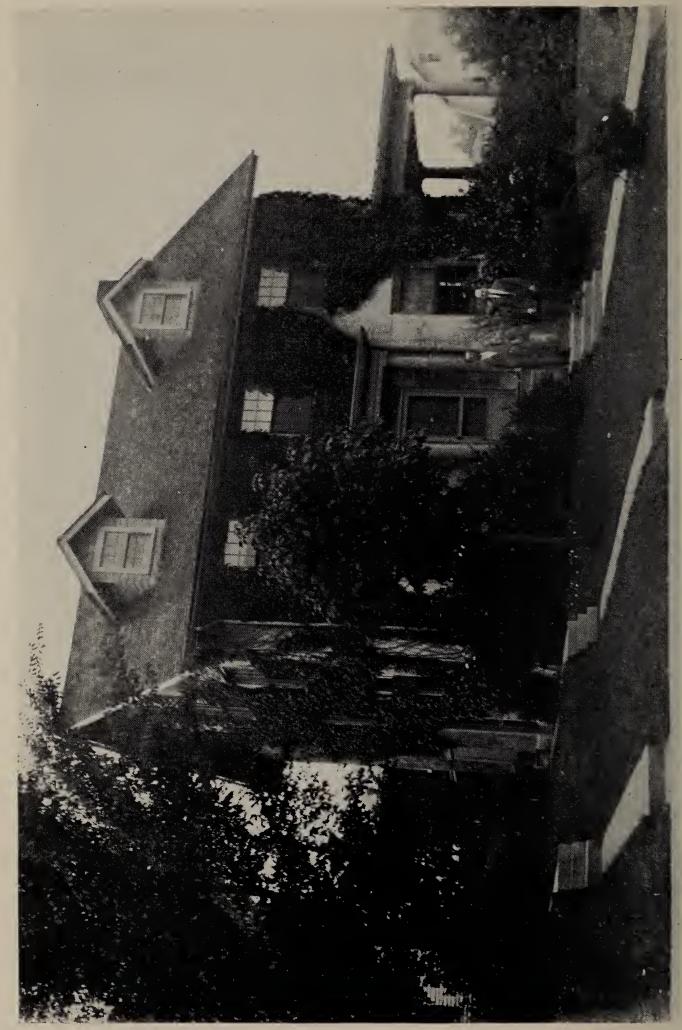
The house we moved to was next to that of the Westons. I soon discovered the sterling qualities of Professor Nathan A. Weston's character. In addition to his sound scholarship, he was a man of absolute integrity, always saying exactly what he meant and meaning what he said. It was not easy to get close to him; he seemed rather aloof, but the better you knew him, the more you liked him. The Westons had two children, a boy and a girl. Ray took a great liking to little Janet and when a misfortune struck, the child having succumbed to an attack of infantile paralysis, it was a blow to both of us. Her illness brought the Weston and Litman families more closely together than it would

have been perhaps the case otherwise. Soon after Ray's death, Janet, now a member of the Department of Economics, came to see me and brought along a present which Ray gave her when she was ill with polio and which, she told me, she treasured most highly. It was touching to hear her tell of the affection she had as a child for Ray.

An event seldom occurring in real estate history took place after we lived a few years in the house. The place was just newly decorated, the landlord having given Ray a free hand in the selection of the wall paper, the flower and the vegetable gardens were doing exceptionally well, promising abundant returns on the efforts expended upon them; we were looking forward to a continued stay in what Ray made an attractive home, when out of a clear blue sky we received a notice that the house had been sold, the purchaser not even having gone through the premises. It was a well-known fact that Ray took good care of the property and that it was a good buy. And so we had to move. I decided then and there that taking exceptionally good care of rented property may be in the public interest, but as a private proposition it was fraught with dangers; however, Ray and I did not see eye to eye in this case; she continued to keep up to the best of her ability the places we rented, in many cases improving them.

After a few months of rather unpleasant stay in an apartment, we moved to a house owned by the Bogarts. Our back yards adjoined each other and Ray had some interesting experiences with little Philip, Professor Ernest Ludlow Bogart's son. One day he ran into our place, gleefully announcing: "I fooled her." The mother locked him in, at least she thought so, but he escaped through an open door in the basement. On another occasion, while I was in the study, I heard Ray calling





THE LITMAN RESIDENCE IN URBANA, ILLINOIS (1921-1925)

me to come down as quickly as possible. Little Philip was in the front seat of an automobile parked before our home. This time he did not fool his mother,—he was fooling with the mechanism of the car and Ray was afraid that he might start the auto moving. Out of the car he went as soon as I was able to reach him.

Professor Bogart was the head of the Economics Department. One of the things that the first lady of the Department is supposed to do is to call on the wives of the newly arrived faculty members if they are blessed with wives and also to hold receptions for the staff. Mrs. Bogart was not very keen to exercise these functions; she preferred to spend her time painting and doing occasional writing, letting social affairs of the Department take care of themselves. This attitude on the part of Mrs. Bogart found a responsive chord in Ray. Mrs. Bogart wanted to be let alone; this did not apply to her relations with Ray; they understood each other, met on common ground and became friends. When Professor Bogart retired in 1938, Ray entertained Commerce faculty wives at a luncheon at which Mrs. Bogart was an honored guest. Some of the women gave farewell talks and Mrs. Bogart told briefly of her experiences in the art world.

When we moved into the house owned by the Bogarts, it was with an understanding that at some future date the place might be put up for sale. Ray told Mrs. Bogart that when they decided to do so she would help her to dispose of the property. She was as good as her word. When after a few years of our stay on the premises the Bogarts decided to sell, it was a case of amazement to me to observe how Ray exerted herself in pointing out to prospective buyers the advantages of our domicile, though it meant our vacating it. And so the house was sold and we had to move again.

It took me some time to persuade Ray to go into an apartment. She liked to work in a garden. I always assisted her during the planting and cultivating periods. Then we would go away for the summer. While realizing that working outdoors was a healthy exercise and that it was a pleasure to watch things grow, as an economist, I did not relish the idea of having other parties reap the benefit of our efforts and loving care, more loving in the case of Ray than mine; I resented someone else using "our" radishes and lettuce, "our" carrots and beets while we were away. A contributing cause for my desire that we should go into an apartment was the ever increasing difficulty of finding some one to care for the property during our absences in the summer, as well as the realization of the fact that the years were not standing still and that it would be wise for Ray to curtail some of her physical activities.

With the coming to Illinois a load seemed to have been lifted from Ray's shoulders. She began to act more like her former self, interested in the life of the college faculty, of the Champaign-Urbana community in general and of the Jewish members of it in particular, as well as in the activities of the Jewish students on the campus. There were not many of the latter when we came; those who wanted to be known as Jews soon found out that a warm welcome awaited them in our home, that both Ray and I were anxious to get acquainted with them and, if need be, to be of service.

A year before we arrived to Illinois a group of them had founded a society under the name of *Ivrim* which adopted a constitution setting forth as one of its objects a broader knowledge of matters pertaining to Judaism. It did fine, if limited work, in inculcating into the Jewish students on the campus the respect for and pride in their Jewish heritage. Mrs. Litman became

very much interested in the work of the organization and participated wholeheartedly in its activities. Meetings were held bi-weekly on the fifth floor of the now defunct University Hall. It was a stiff climb on the creeky wooden stairs to reach the meeting place. But we hardly ever failed to attend and to participate in the lively discussions. The society struggled along with a varying degree of success, without adequate funds to support its program, without a meeting place which it could call its own. It was kept alive by the devotion to the idea which animated it on the part of a few, not the least of whom was Ray.

Up to 1911, its membership averaged about thirty; it rose to seventy-five in 1912, the year of its merging with Menorah. This event injected new life into the organization and rallied to its support a number of Jewish students who heretofore had stood aloof from anything which would bring them together for social intercourse, for the study of Jewish problems or for the advancement of Jewish culture.

In 1915, Ray inaugurated what may be considered as a precursor of religious courses carried on at present under the auspices of Hillel in its different Foundations. In that year she formed a study circle which used to meet in our home and which concerned itself with Jewish post-biblical history. The group was led by Ray whose earnestness and zeal commanded the respect of the students. Attendance varied from ten to fifteen. To quote from a report of Anita Libman (later Lebeson) in the *Menorah Journal* for 1915:

Judging from the enthusiasm of the members, the study circle was going to become a permanent feature of the Menorah activities. 136

¹³⁶ In the *Menorah Journal* (1915), pp. 329-330, under "Activities of Menorah Societies," Anita Libman [Lebeson] reported on the activities at the University of Illinois.

The prediction of Anita, one of our ablest students whose interest in Jewish history was awakened by the attendance of the meetings, proved correct. The work was carried on until supplanted by the courses established by the Hillel Foundation. Another member of the study circle Anne Marks Gustafson wrote:

Mrs. Litman is the most inspiring memory I have of the University of Illinois. Her depth of feeling, understanding, service and high ideals which she, unlike many others who profess them in public, but are quite different in their daily lives, actually lived and inspired all whom she met. How well do I remember going to the group meetings in your living room.¹³⁷

Deprecating her own limited knowledge of the subjects under discussion, she added:

How patient she was about it, because she realized the value of other training besides merely formal religious schooling. Then her little supper parties—all in such good taste and tasting so good. Isn't it wonderful to have had such a friend.¹³⁸

"The procession of years in Urbana"



The morning after my arrival in Urbana I called on Dr. Kinley in his office in old University Hall. The first impression I gained of him was that of a very serious and austere person whose searching penetrating look made me feel somewhat uncomfortable. It did not take me long to discover that his cold matter-offact exterior was the outward manifestation of repression of feeling and that back of it were rare qualities of openmindedness and warmth of heart. Speaking at a testimonial dinner tendered to him in 1940 on the

¹³⁷ L.C.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

occasion of his retirement from the Chairmanship of the First National Bank in Champaign, I said after many years of my association with Dr. Kinley:

If I were asked what are the most outstanding characteristics of Dr. Kinley which should endear him to all of us, I would say that they are his intellectual integrity, his unwillingness to sacrifice fundamentals on the altar of expediency, his uncompromising search for truth, and last but not least his insistence that individuals stand or fall on their own merits; that no one should be condemned because he belongs to a particular faith or race . . .

Mrs. Kinley, attractive and accomplished, was a kind and noble soul. One needed to be with her but a short time to have been brought under the spell of her charming personality. Mrs. Kinley knew of our appreciation of good music and on a number of occasions she invited us to be her guests at the Star Course concerts. While we had our own tickets we invariably accepted the invitation, as we enjoyed being in her company.

In 1931 occurred the untimely death of Mrs. Kinley who contracted a fatal disease while traveling with Dr. Kinley in China. To express what her passing meant to Ray and to me I wish to quote from what I wrote to Dr. Kinley when we learned of her death:

When the news of the tragedy came to us both Mrs. Litman and I were stunned, grief stricken and our thoughts went out to you in deep sympathy and in prayer that Providence may help you to bear the burden. We realized that if we were so deeply moved, if our hearts were so saddened how great must be your sorrow in losing the kind and noble soul who was your life's companion.

Replying to this letter, Dr. Kinley wrote:

It has been impossible for me to answer otherwise than by formal card, all the kind letters I have received in the past two months. Some, however, I want to acknowledge more personally and yours of May 18, is one. Since you joined our staff at the University, Mrs. Kinley and I have always had a high regard and affection for you and Mrs. Litman, as for old friends. So your kind message was peculiarly grateful to me and I thank you . . .

Upon the death of Dr. Kinley in 1944, replying to our expressions of sympathy, Janet, Kinley's younger daughter, wrote to Ray:

I have just time for a note to you (before going to the train). Mother always admired you so much that I know she would want me to write you amongst the first.

There were other dear friends. It was a pleasant coincidence that on a number of our trips we ran into Professor and Mrs. Harry G. Paul, a delightful couple to know. One summer we met them at the entrance of the Olympic hotel in Seattle, at another time we came across them on the way to Chinatown in San Francisco, and as we were boarding the *Albertic* in Liverpool in 1935 we heard to our great surprise the friendly cheerful voice of Mrs. Paul calling to us. We travelled on the same boat back to the United States which made the voyage doubly agreeable.

Like ourselves the Pauls were childless and they were devoted to each other; both were very talented; he, a Professor of English Literature, she a fine pianist; it was good to be the recipients of their hospitality and the untimely death of Mrs. Paul and a short time later of Professor Paul, was a grievous loss to us as well as to many of their other friends.

As I look back I also remember some seemingly formal dinners which we attended at the Lloyd Moreys. I say seemingly for while the affairs were characterized by a certain amount of formality, this formality would melt away under the warmth of their personalities

and their wholeheartedness. So many pleasant hours were spent by Ray and me in their attractive home where friendly conversation and good music would quickly while the time away.

Speaking of the welcome accorded to us and the more or less sympathetic ties established between us and a number of members of the University faculty, I would be remiss if I do not mention, in addition to those spoken of before, the Bogarts, the Hayes, the Hunters, the Dewsnups, the Thompsons, and, during the last few years before Ray's illness overtook her, the Dunbars and the Janvrins, with whom we met for Sundays dinners either in the Men's or the Women's club; they were pleasant meetings which both Ray and I enjoyed.

Ray participated in the gatherings sponsored by the women of the College of Commerce, speaking there on many occasions. I was told that the talks were most interesting and were very much appreciated.

Ray was one of the organizers of the Champaign Branch of the League of Women Voters, thus reversing her opposition to the movement when it started in 1895. Upon the completion of the organization work, Mrs. Joseph Cullen Blair, the wife of the then Dean of the College of Agriculture wrote:

I cannot allow the Constitutional Committee to disband without telling you how much I enjoyed meeting you and how much dependent upon your judgment and advice I was.

Ray became the Chairman of the Program Committee when the League began to function.

¹³⁸a Edward Cary Hayes.

¹³⁸b Merlin Harold Hunter.

¹³⁹ Ernest Ritson Dewsnup.

¹⁴⁰ Charles Manfred Thompson.

¹⁴¹ Louise Dunbar.

¹⁴² Charles Edwin Janvrin.

John E. Slater came to Illinois in 1925 as the head of the Department of Transportation; he stayed here but one year, but during this short time the Slater and Litman families became very well acquainted; it was with regret that we saw Slater go, but the University could not compete with the business interests in the East, which called him back. In 1927, on Slater's recommendation, I became the Chairman of the committee to study the financial aspects of the four-day liners to carry passengers, mail and express cargo between the United States and England. In this connection a large part of the 1928 summer was spent by Ray and me in Philadelphia. I was somewhat worried as to how Ray would stand the moist hot weather there, but she stood it very well. "Mrs. Litman always found a park to sit in," wrote Anne Gustafson, recollecting those days. She was very much on her own as my time during the day was spent at the American Brown Boveri Shipyards in Camden.

At my suggestion Slater was asked to give a few talks at the University in 1929; Mrs. John E. [Pauline] Slater came along. Upon her return to Riverton, New Jersey, she wrote to Ray:

After such wonderful hospitality as you and Professor Litman have shown us, it seems most ungrateful for me not to have written sooner. You both played such a large part in the very delightful and happy visit to Urbana. Of course, you are very thoughtful. Our friendship with you has been a great happiness and treasure.

Your dinner party was a distinct success, and the little entertainment at your home charming . . . I can not thank you enough for all your kindnesses but you both have been splendid to us . . .

Slater spoke again at the University the following year. Mrs. Slater wrote to Ray after this occasion:

You did so many kind and lovely things for me, and for us during our recent happy visit to Urbana that it is difficult for me to express my appreciation. Luncheon, dinner, attending Elliot's evening lecture when you felt so badly, you should not have done that!

Your lovely "party" on Tuesday evening was more pleasing than I can say! We were tremendously pleased to see all the friends and grateful to them all for coming. I also consider it a tribute to you, Mrs. Litman. I do not believe that such a group would have come to see us, after having had one invitation recalled, if it had been some other person for whom they cared little who was giving the tea or party. To me it proved, though I needed no proof, that you both stand very high in the esteem of all who know you. That includes the Slaters, you know too . . . My "petit point" hand-kerchief is with my treasure, because you gave it to me.

May the greatest happiness there is come to you and Mr. Litman. With great appreciation and with love—

Affectionately,

PAULINE SLATER.

Ray liked to participate in what one may call social events given by the University faculty and was especially pleased to entertain graduate students, who found her a gracious and friendly hostess.

The person in the Jewish community who made us most welcome upon arrival to Champaign was Isaac Kuhn. I can do no better than repeat some of the remarks which I have made at a dinner given in his honor about eighteen years ago. I said then:

When Mrs. Litman and I came to Urbana-Champaign, strangers as we were, the first friendly greetings we received were from you; you were the one who exhibited the real genuine interest in us, the new Jewish members of the University of Illinois faculty. It is you who did all you could to make us understand that we were welcome and who made it somewhat easier for us to adapt ourselves to new conditions. I do not want to say that some of the other Jew-

ish townspeople have not shaken our hands and have not bestowed on us gracious smiles, but it was you whose welcome was the warmest, whose interest was the deepest and who attempted to make us feel more than any one else at home here.

Mr. Kuhn, whose first wife died a few years before our coming to Illinois, lived in a large house with two young daughters and a housekeeper. We were often guests in his home as well as recipients of other tokens of his hospitality. Gradually the aloofness with which we were greeted by other representatives of Jewish society gave way to a desire to know us better. They apparently decided that we were quite respectable, not bad people to associate with, and so it did not take very long before we became integrated into the Jewish communal life of the twin cities.

Ray became much interested in one Jewish family whose husband taught at the University, the Kollers.143 We were here a few years before Mrs. Koller came as a young bride. Three girls were born from the union, -sweet, attractive girls who grew under our eyes from babyhood into childhood and adolescence; we saw them develop, graduate from the high school and the University and then get married and bear children. What Ray approved very much of was the way in which the children were reared by Professor Koller with the assistance of his capable wife. Koller combined an unswerving loyalty to the land of his adoption, (both he and Mrs. Koller were born in Hungary) with a passionate devotion to Jewish faith and Jewish traditions. This attitude he considered as his solemn obligation to transmit to the girls, and he succeeded in doing so.

¹⁴³ Armin H. Koller.

We became close to the Sachar family. Dr. Abram L. Sachar wrote when the news of Ray's death reached him at Waltham, Massachusetts:

My mind goes back to the very beginning of our friendship when I came as a young instructor to Illinois. Almost the first people that we met were you and Mrs. Litman; we found in you the deepest and warmest kind of friendship and a pride in Jewish life which made it easy always to come to both of you for counsel. Mrs. Litman represented for us the symbol of the Jewess at her best—sensitive to Jewish values but always well balanced enough not to be oversensitive. Every good cause claimed her devotion so that thinking back over them is like calling the roll of everything that is worthwhile in American and Jewish life . . .

We hardly ever missed the Sunday morning services when Dr. Sachar was in the pulpit; rain or shine it was one of the musts on Ray's calendar; we also attended a number of dinners at Sachar's home when he and his charming wife Thelma entertained visitors who came to speak under the auspices of the Hillel Foundation. Mrs. Horwitz, Thelma's mother and Ray became close friends; her untimely death was a lamentable event in the life of our Jewish community.

The Pierces¹⁴⁴ and their daughter and son-in-law Ann and Sam Gluskoters came to the twin cities many years after we settled here. Their hospitality and generosity and their close adherence to Jewish tenets and traditions made both Ray and me cherish their acquaintance which ripened into one of the warmest of friendships. When dark days began to crowd upon me because of Ray's ever increasing disability none were more understanding and more desirous to help than these kindly people.

¹⁴⁴ David Pierce.

They saw me breaking down under the strain and were insistent that I should put Ray in a sanatorium, which I finally and very reluctantly did. And when I was taking her to Peoria they did not want me to go alone. The receptionist after I gave her my name and address asked me whether I can give somebody else's name with whom they could communicate in case of need. I looked at Ann; she nodded her head. "Relatives of yours?" "No," I replied, "more and better than many of the relatives; they are friends."

Soon after our arrival to Urbana-Champaign we attended the High Holiday services; due to the absence of a temple they were held in the Baptist Church. Here we met a group of Reform Jews, some of whom settled here when the towns were just emerging from the prairies and who were proud of having been amongst the early settlers. A surprise was in store for Ray when the morning services on the Day of Atonement were interrupted at about twelve oclock and the members of the congregation began to leave the place. "What is this for?" she asked. She was informed that the people were going home,—some to partake of food so as to recuperate from a few hours of not eating and others just to rest before returning for the remainder of the services. While in favor of "enlightenment," Ray was not favorably impressed by such proceedings. It was too much of a reform for her. We remained in the church, Ray continuing her prayers, and I thinking my thoughts, some of which, I must confess, were not exactly of a religious character.

Regular services were held on Sunday mornings. When we came to Champaign the Congregation had no permanent rabbi; the persons who officiated were young men, students at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. They came inflicting upon us their ama-

teurish delivery, their stiff gestures and their more or less half-baked ideas. At times my patience was very sorely tried. It was hard for me to sit through such ordeals, but Ray was most charitable. "What can you expect?" she would say, "He is young, he will learn and will do better later on." One year we succeeded in bringing to the pulpit every second week one of the prominent rabbis from Chicago; it was a treat for Ray and for me to listen to sermons by Gerson B. Levi, Felix A. Levy, Tobias Schanfarber and others. Then one day, in 1921, there came to preach in our temple a tall, impressive looking young man, with a cheerful contagious smile, with a genial manner, but with a great driving force back of his amiability, a young man with a great vision, with a desire to do service for his people. Benjamin M. Frankel came, he saw and he conquered. After the Congregation heard him conduct the services in a rich, resonant voice carrying conviction, after it heard some of his sermons full of practical idealism and lofty aspiration, we asked him that upon his graduation from the Hebrew Union College he should settle in our community, should become our spiritual leader. Not the least of those who were anxious for him to come was Ray.

Participating actively in the Jewish communal life of Champaign-Urbana, Ray organized the Sinai Temple Sisterhood and helped in the establishment of Hadassah. Asked to become the first President of the Sisterhood, she outlined in her inaugural address the foundation of the work to be carried on by that organization. She emphasized the fact that women have always been an important element in fostering Judaism and that its preservation and development may be largely measured by their attitude towards the synagogue. Speaking of outside influences affecting Jewish

religious and communal life, influences quite noticeable in the two towns and referring to regrettable cases of one Jew setting himself against another Jew, she admonished her listeners:

in an organization such as this our affairs should be decided by ourselves in these vestry rooms. Here let us propose measures, discuss them, criticize them always in sincerity and good will. But once having set ourselves to do something let us keep our troubles to ourselves . . . As Jews let us serve Judaism; as citizens, our community; as Americans, our blessed country.

Ray's preoccupation with the religious and social life of the Jewish students as well as her concern over the lack of interest in spiritual values to be discerned amongst the Jewry both here and outside of the confines of our towns was brought out most clearly in her report to Sinai Sisterhood in 1925.145 At the request of Mrs. Abraham Weil, one of the members of the Sisterhood of the Temple Isaiah Israel in Chicago, who with others visited Champaign in the autumn of that year, the report was sent to the Chicago sisterhood. It was read there and, to quote from Mrs. Weil's letter "was received with great ovation and adjudged a masterly piece of work." In this report Ray spoke of the work of the Hillel Foundation which was organized three years before due to the efforts of the able and energetic Rabbi Frankel. Until very recently, the report said:

Its support came from the two communities of Champaign and Urbana and its immediate requirements were met and well met by Sinai Sisterhood.¹⁴⁶

The report continued:

We were few in numbers but some of us were convinced

¹⁴⁵ Sinai Sisterhood Report, LC.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

that a field of wider, nobler usefulness might be attained and as you know our views have been justified.¹⁴⁷

In order to attract and to hold the interest of the woefully indifferent Jewish students, the members of the Sisterhood invited them to their homes, held public receptions and dances for them at which refreshments were served, sponsored with success public *sedarim* and in many other ways assisted Rabbi Frankel to realize the ideas which he advanced. In addition to these matters the Sisterhood paid for the services of our Sabbath school teachers. The Chairman on Religion, Mrs. Litman,

continually emphasized the desirability of the greatest cordiality on the part of officers towards the members generally but particularly towards new members so that they would like to attend our meetings and thus acquire this good habit.¹⁴⁸

She continued in the report:

From the material side most of our efforts have been successful . . . It has occurred to me that our very success in achieving material objects may be really a hindrance to higher achievements of the spirit. The chairman on religion has tried Bible classes, study classes, etc., and always the same group of faithful ones attends, but those who most need instruction, those most ignorant of essentials of Judaism and of the Jewish history stay aloof and yet they frequently lead in the efforts to raise money for this or that. Our greatest problem is to convert ability in material matters into enlightened enthusiasm for spiritual progress.

Two frequent visitors in our home were Professors Jacob Zeitlin and David Blondheim, both fine scholars in their respective fields, but quite different in their personal characteristics. Professor Zeitlin was calm

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

and dignified, confident in himself and in his knowledge of English philology, literature and everything else that an educated man was expected to know. It seemed as if few things would ever ruffle him and that he could find a reasonable explanation for every phenomenon which would present itself. We had lengthy after dinner discussions in our home in which I acted at times as a mediator, and it would often be quite late before the conversation would come to an end; too late, it seemed to me, as I had early morning classes; however, there was no way of stopping the clash of bright intellects;—I am referring here to Zeitlin and Ray.

Professor Blondheim was nervous, very sensitive, acted as if he were not always sure of himself, and yet determined to forge ahead. In contrast to Zeitlin, he was very much interested in Jews and Judaism, not merely as a historical fact, which Zeitlin conceived it to be, but as a living reality. Blondheim was unpredictable and one did not always feel at ease in his company. Of the two, Ray preferred Zeitlin, even if she did not always agree with him, but with whom she could argue, to his and her heart's content and whom she succeeded in bringing into closer contact with the Jewish students.

In 1917, for the celebration of Purim she wrote and produced a play, the contents of which, to my regret, are nowhere to be found. It was staged in the Adelphi Hall, in the old University Building, with fifteen students participating. The hall was crowded to capacity and the play was pronounced a success.

After we came to Illinois, Ray delivered a number of talks in different parts of the State. She also addressed the Jewish Chautauqua Society in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (July 2, 1911) on the "Jew in Fiction." She spoke before the Chicago Council of Jewish Women in the

spring of 1917, when according to a letter from Mrs. Felix A. Levy, then the President of the organization, she brought an inspiring message; it must have been well received as she was asked to come again the following year. By coincidence her talk on "Awakened Jewry and the War" was scheduled to be delivered on November 11, 1918. As it was Armistice Day, I had my misgiving regarding the advisability of her going to Chicago but she was determined to keep the engagement. She was met at the Illinois Central Station by one of the Council's members; due to surging crowds and traffic congestion it took three hours before she could reach the meeting place. The ladies waited patiently for her arrival and I understand were fully repaid for their patience by what Ray said and the way she said it.

Before the Champaign-Urbana Alliance Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, she spoke on October 16, 1920, on the "American Jew: Americanization." At the Chanukah Festival, arranged by the Chicago Board of Jewish Education, her address was on "The Twentieth Century Maccabean Patriotism" (December 21, 1921). Other groups which she addressed included the Willing Workers of the Temple Ohabai Shalome of San Francisco, where she spoke on "Jewishness and Service" on January 17, 1922; the Phoebe Society of the First Methodist Church of Champaign where she gave upon her return from Russia in 1931 "an informal and most interesting talk" on conditions as she found them in that country; she discussed "The Tariff" before the Champaign County League of Women Voters, where, as it was to be expected, she advocated a more liberal tariff policy. In May, 1932, she gave "a wonderful talk which was greatly enjoyed by all" before the B'nai Abraham Temple Sisterhood of

Decatur, Illinois. She spoke also in Champaign and Urbana before the Sinai Temple Sisterhood, the Unity Club, the Menorah Society and the Faculty Women of the College of Commerce.

On April 28, 1925, Ray held a memorial service for her beloved British friend, Nina Davis Salaman, on which occasion eulogistic remarks were made by Dr. Moses Jung, Professor Jacob Zeitlin and Dr. Abram L. Sachar. Drawing upon his personal reminiscences, Dr. Sachar said:

Mrs. Salaman was not only one of the most beautiful women I have ever known, but her face had a most spiritual and saintly expression.

Professor Zeitlin read several of her poems and brought out the universality of their character. Ray emphasized the fact that while "she came of a family of Spanish grandees" and all her life was surrounded by affluence and pleasantness

she was none the less sympathetic with all peoples. Her universal feeling for humanity made her very much beloved . . . Too high tribute to her saintly life and personal charm cannot be paid. Her life and work will inspire others to noble efforts.

Ray's article in memory of Mrs. Salaman was to appear in the *Menorah Journal* but for some reason never accounted for was never published. In it Ray began her memorial by saying that

there has recently passed away in England Nina Davis Salaman, the foremost Jewess of her time. I use the word foremost because in her life and work she personified that which to-day Jews throughout the world say is our greatest need, a revival of spirituality whose source is knowledge of Jewish traditions and history; an understanding of Judaism from

the facts of life; a faith springing from a consciously cherished ideal whose roots are embedded deep in the past . . .

Because the life and the death of Nina Salaman offer a strikingly significant example of what we Jews proclaim as our most vital necessity as well as our greatest glory, it has seemed strangely inconsistent that in this country her passing away caused so little comment. With the exception of a few brief excerpts taken from an English journal there was nothing to indicate that a Talmid Chacham, a star of Jewish glory, has crossed the horizon . . .

At the interment of Nina Salaman were gathered many, whose names are high in the social, professional and business world of the Empire, Jews and non-Jews. Church and laity paid honor to her life and work, because not only had a scholar and a poet passed away, but a noble woman, wife and mother . . .

No eulogy of Nina Salaman would be complete without mention of her distinguished husband, Dr. Redcliffe Salaman, himself an author, scientist and devoted Jew. Theirs was a perfect union, and the fruit of this four beautiful children, each talented and promising to carry on the traditions of loyalty and learning, perfected the short span of her life . . .

After referring to Nina's father and mother, both of Sephardic origin and both persons of culture and refinement, the father by profession an engineer and by inclination a fine Hebrew scholar, Ray proceeded to consider Nina Salaman's contributions as a translator of the lyrics of Jehudah Halevi, Ibn Ezra, Ibn Gabirol and others, as well as a writer of original verse. The latter were published under the title *The Voices of the Rivers*;

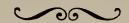
meditative in character, they revealed the pensive sweetness of Nina Salaman's character and the calmness and serenity of her environment . . .

At intervals Nina Salaman contributed various articles to the Jewish Chronicle, the Jewish Quarterly Review, the Menorah Journal, etc. She was also a gifted lecturer... Shortly before her death appeared a volume of her translations of the poems of Jehudah Halevi whom she loved above all other poets...

Nina Salaman died on February 22, 1925. Charming Homestall where she lived for many years dispensing her gracious hospitality while singing songs of Zion will miss her; so will the Jewish students of Cambridge University in whom she was always interested; so will all who came in contact with her; they will forever walk under the spell of her influence...¹⁴⁹

It was a tribute from Ray's heart.

"Our travels"



As Ray could not stand the excessive heat of Midwestern summers, we were usually away from the twin cities during this season.

Our travels took us up to Colorado, California, Canada and across the Atlantic to England, France, Germany and other European countries as well as to the Middle East and Russia. One of the most memorable trips occurred in 1931 when we visited Soviet Russia. Knowing what conditions we were likely to meet in the Bolshevik controlled country I tried to persuade Ray to stay in the Excelsior Hotel in Berlin where we had a comfortable room, but, as was to be expected, my plan was foredoomed to failure. "I go where you go" was Ray's reply and there was nothing to do about it; she did not want me to go alone.

And so from then capitalistic Poland we crossed into the country of the proletarian dictatorship where un-

The quotations cited here and above are from the typescript of her eulogy (LC). Cf. Herbert M. Loewe, "Nina Salaman, 1877–1925," in the Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, vol. XI (London, 1928), pp. 228–232.

der the five year plan all efforts were concentrated on the development of heavy industries, on the making of tanks and guns, of locomotives and rolling stock, and where foodstuffs and consumers goods in general were hard to get, where people lived in congested quarters and where they were tightening their belts (if they had any belts to tighten) in wistful anticipation of better times to come.

What contrast there was between Stolpce on the Polish border with its more or less cheerful atmosphere and Negoreloje in Russia, so gray, so bleak, and so forbidding looking.

The purpose of my coming to Russia was to visit my aging and ailing mother who lived at the home of some friends in Rostov on Don. And so after a few days in Moscow, where we stayed with a professor's family as no hotel was willing to give me a room, we moved South.

It did not take long for Ray to win the affection of my mother as well as of the members of the Sweitzer family, with whom she lived. It was interesting to note my mother's complete confidence in Ray's judgment, in her desire to help, to note how she listened to Ray's advice in preference to anyone else's. Due to the condition of her health she could not go out. The apartment, located on the second floor, had a balcony overlooking the street and what was called the garden of "culture and recreation." For some reason my mother could not be induced to sit on the balcony, except on very rare occasions until Ray in her persuasive way made her understand how desirable it was for her to spend some time each day in the fresh air.

Our being in Rostov created a problem for the two Sweitzer sisters who ran the house; there were two additional mouths to feed. It was not a question of money but where to get the needed supplies. We brought with us some provisions but these were soon exhausted.

The family diet consisted largely of black bread, meatless soups, some vegetables and dried fish, mostly skin and bones. The black or so-called rye bread, had a small quantity of rye, but mixed with it were other substances, neither palatable, nor digestible. We were supplied with what was called French rolls; a worse libel on the product of French bakeries could not be imagined. Meat appeared on the table only when peasants would bring some to be sold in the open market. It was a struggle to get it as the demand was much greater than the supply. I remember how on one occasion, the sister who usually attended to the buying operations came back all disheveled, with her blouse torn but with a chunk of precious meat in her possession. The sisters wanted us to be well fed, and they did all in their power to accomplish this, but due to shortage of food sometimes with rather meagre results. In Moscow the two places where we were able to get anything more or less palatable to eat were the two first-class hotels, the Savoy and the Metropole; there were no such hotels in Rostov.

Ray wondered how people who lived under such adverse conditions could be so kind, so thoughtful, and so hospitable. The once fine apartment in which we stayed in Rostov was in a state of decay. A couple of broken panes of glass were patched up with cardboard, as there was no window glass to be had; the lock on the entrance door was out of order; there was no locksmith to be found to fix it, nor a new lock to be bought, and so one had to resort to a strong string in order to keep the door closed; marble stairs were broken in a number of places and one had to navigate them carefully; one of the worst features of the woefully neglected, over-

crowded apartment house was the presence of cockroaches; this was more upsetting to the champion of cleanliness, Ray, perhaps than many other problems we had to contend with.

After we left Russia Ray spoke often of the Sweitzer family, particularly of the two sisters who carried on so efficiently, so uncomplainingly in the face of sometimes insurmountable handicaps; Ray spoke of them with tears in her eyes; one of them particularly left an indelible impression upon her; she called her an angel, —and angelic she was with her soft troubled eyes full of understanding and compassion, with her quiet, unselfish ways, with her willingness to help, whatever the cost.

As a sequel to the story, my mother died a few months after we returned to the United States, and all members of the Sweitzer family were killed when Hitler's troops occupied Rostov.

Ray withstood the rigours of the life in Russia much better than I feared she would, but it was quite a relief to leave the land of a totalitarian regime, the land supposedly ruled by workers and peasants and get back to Stolpce where the West began.

There were some customs-house formalities to attend to and there were some questions I wanted to ask of Ray, but there was no Ray in sight. After some search I finally found her in the station's dining room sitting contentedly at an attractively set table where many appetizing foods were displayed and where orders could be given for a number of meat and fish dishes. Who could blame her after what she has gone through in Russia? Tasty, satisfying food in abundance, within reach, as one of the results, if not of freedom of thought, at least of freedom of action, the result of free enterprise. We had a very good meal which made us

forget some of the troubles we encountered during our travels in the Soviet Union.

In 1935, I took a half year sabbatical leave of absence from the University in order to make a study of the effects of Great Britain's abandonment of her free trade policy. Before going to England where I expected to spend most of the time, we went on a Mediterranean trip with Palestine as a final destination. The journey on one of the American Export Company's liners started most unhappily; on the fourth day at sea, Ray fell in our cabin and was confined to bed until we reached the port of Haifa. No X-ray examination could be had on board ship. Upon arrival at Haifa we learned that Ray had broken one of her knee caps. She was incapacitated during our stay in Palestine with a plaster cast encasing her injured leg; however, she could take trips in a car and see come of the sights of the country, and some of the persons connected with the Hebrew University at Mount Scopus came to visit us when we stayed in Jerusalem.

To add to our misadventures while we were in Jerusalem, I contracted a bad case of something between intestinal flu and I do not know what else; my hands were covered with a rash as if I were bitten by thousands of insects or flies. It took me a few days to get back to normal under the care of a refugee doctor from Germany who told us that my case while serious was not dangerous; it was far from pleasant while it lasted.

As I moved around in Tel Aviv I felt the throbbing pulse of a city in the making, a city where many of the former white collar men, Jewish lawyers and physicians, secretaries and accountants turned into carpenters and bricklayers, into taxicab drivers and policemen, into diggers of trenches and pavers of streets,





EN ROUTE TO PALESTINE AND ENGLAND, 1935

where outside of the city men and women were transforming in many places seemingly barren ground into green fields and orchards.

In Jerusalem we became acquainted with a middle-aged woman, formerly a teacher in Germany who drove an old and somewhat dilapidated car; this was the car which Ray preferred to ride in, because she got interested in the intelligent, well-educated woman who owned it. In the course of conversation she told us that while she was in Germany she was not interested in Jewish people and Judaism but since she came to Palestine her attitude in this respect underwent a complete change; she became proud of her Jewish heritage.

The location of the Hebrew University gave me much concern. Both Ray and I had some lengthy discussions regarding the past, the present and the probable future of this institution of higher learning on Mount Scopus. We talked to a few of the professors who came to see us at the Goldsmith pension. I expressed my doubts concerning the desirability of putting up University buildings in what I conceived to be such a vulnerable location. Surrounded by a hostile Arab world the place could be easily isolated. Ray shared my views, and the professors could not dispel our doubts and fears, which future events unfortunately justified. To our regret, Dr. Judah Leon Magnes, whom Ray had seen grow up in Oakland, California, was away while we were in Palestine.

After leaving the Near East and spending a couple of days in Marseilles and about a week in Paris, we settled in London. It was a London quite different from the city Ray knew when she was there before. Most of her friends and close acquaintances were gone and there were many crippled men on the streets, crippled in the first World War, grim reminders of the past.

Ray's knee healed sufficiently to permit her to walk with the assistance of a cane. There is a certain fascination in walking in many parts of London; it is a city that grows on one the longer one stays there. One can understand the thoughts which animated Heinrich Heine when he wrote about one hundred years ago:

I saw the most remarkable sight that the World can present to the surprised spirit of man . . . I saw London. 150

As one strolls on its streets, one can almost reconstruct the colorful history of England; one gets used to the fog and the drizzle; unmindful of it one stops before a plaque telling that here Dickens, or Thackeray, or Carlyle wrote one of their masterpieces and then one drops into a bookshop on the road and browses around looking over some of the early editions of well-known essays or novels. Ray enjoyed such strolls as well as our visits to the British Museum, the National Art Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum;—and then we would stop for a bite to eat (our main meals were taken in the boarding house); frequently in one of the ABC or Lyons tea rooms.

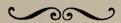
There was a book lending library a few blocks away from the place where we stayed and Ray would take out some books to read while I was interviewing people or taking notes in the library of the London School of Economics.

We were invited to a few "teas"; one which etched itself particularly on my mind and I think also on Ray's as we talked about it for quite a while after the affair, was a tea given by the Harold Laskis. They lived in a labor quarter of the city, quite a ride from where we stayed. When we arrived we found a few other guests.

¹⁵⁰ Sämmtliche Werke (Hamburg, 1868), vol. III, p. 15.

Our reward for coming was in addition to some refreshments, a monologue delivered by the host. There is no denying the fact that Laski was a very interesting speaker, but one felt that someone else should have been given a chance to say something, wise or foolish. It was decidedly a one-man performance, everyone just taking in what the host was saying with scarcely a chance to edge in a few words. While admiring Laski's brilliant mind, Ray disliked his self-assurance and more than that his seemingly small concern with the plight of his people and the comparatively few efforts which he made in their behalf.

One invitation specified "dinner-jacket—not full evening dress for your husband's information." As the husband had no dinner jacket, and as he did not want to buy, to steal or to rent one, we sent our regrets.



When in 1927 we visited the National Jewish Hospital in Denver, Ray was shocked by the lack of proper equipment in its research laboratories; the result was, and here I shall quote from a letter she received from Dr. H. J. Corper:

To my great surprise and delight I was greeted this morning by your lovely letter containing the enclosed beautiful contribution to our work from you and the Temple Sisterhood. I well remember the kindly visit to our institution by you and Professor Litman. I only regret that we could not have done more to add to the pleasure of your brief visit with us . . . I need not tell you that the kindly checks you sent us will materially help in furthering our progress. It is just such confidence and faith as yours that stimulates and urges us to push toward the goal which will mean so much to suffering humanity . . .

As the years were rolling by, Ray became more and more attached to Illinois and to the University. She made a number of friends here, found many things to do which occupied her active mind; both in and outside of the student body and the faculty circles; her intellect and her warm heart, her interest in and her knowledge of public affairs, her forthrightness and her ability to express herself won the respect and admiration of the world in which she moved. As long as her health permitted she led a full and contented life. She loved music and we were regular attendants of the Star Course as well as of any other musical and literary events. When movie houses made their appearance there were none when we came—Ray could be counted amongst those present when a good film and sometimes one not so good was shown.

Many quiet evenings were spent at home reading, listening to the radio or with Ray often asking me to play for her. She seemed to enjoy my efforts to bring to life a Mendelsohn's *Song Without Words*, a Mozart *Fantasia* or a Chopin *Nocturne*.

The high regard in which Ray was held in University circles may be gleaned from the letters written in 1933 by the then President David Kinley and the Dean of the College of Commerce Charles Manfred Thompson commemorating twenty-five years of my services at Illinois. I hope I may be pardoned for quoting from the first part of Dr. Kinley's letter as it brings into better relief what follows:

I recommended his appointment after careful inquiry feeling entirely satisfied that in all respects he would measure up to the position I had in mind for him. In no wise have I been disappointed. Throughout the twenty-five years of his service my professional and personal regard for him has grown stronger. As an economist, he holds a high place among his colleagues in the country. As a scholar he is in





PROFESSOR SIMON LITMAN (Photograph taken in 1942)

the front rank. As a teacher he also occupies a high place. I have found him always the true gentleman, courteous, thoughtful for others, helpful in the affairs of the Department and the University, and ready to make personal sacrifices of personal interest and convenience to help others and to promote the interests of his profession . . . May I add that towards Mrs. Litman, as well as towards her husband, I have always had a feeling of warm personal regard. It had been very obvious to me that she has been to her husband a true helpmeet so that, without in any way disparaging his own efforts, I may say that his success in no small measure is due to her.

Dean C. M. Thompson wrote at the same time:

Mrs. Litman has not only been a great source of inspiration to me, but her life has been a constant source of wonderment. Her grasp of public affairs, her keen sympathy with men and women of the everyday world, and her idealism mark her as a woman greatly out of the ordinary.

During all these years I have watched these two beautiful spirits ripen as they have gone about together, and I have felt that they are models to be followed by the rest of us in our relations one with another and with society in general.

A touching tribute was paid to her upon my retirement in 1942 by Dr. Abram L. Sachar, President of Brandeis University.

Of course, [he wrote,] whatever I say should really apply as well to your dear wife. We have rarely thought of you as two people. In a most unusual degree you have shared and shared so well your interests, your friendships, and all your many loyalties. My mind dwells now on innumerable occasions when I see you together, as perfect a union as we have known. And I think of that lovely bit from Shakespeare, and, believe me dear friends, it applies

"He is the half part of a blessed man
Left to be finished by such as she;
And she a fair divided excellence,
Whose fulness of perfection lies in him.
O, two such silver currents, when they join,
Do glorify the banks that bound them in."

In 1945, we planned to go to Boston and from there to Martha's Vineyard, but our trip had to be cancelled due to an attack of coronary thrombosis which necessitated our staying in Chicago until Ray recovered from the illness. The recovery, however, was not complete. More and more she began to depend on medication to counteract the effects of creeping arteriosclerosis leading to her heart. Then came the hardening of the arteries supplying the blood to the brains. It was pitiful to witness the changes which were coming over her and which finally made me, on the insistence of friends and with much reluctance, place her in a private sanatorium in Peoria.

When we spoke of the ultimate end, and we did speak of it on and off, Ray wanted, if she would die first, to have her remains taken to California; then one day she declared that she really did not see any valid reason for this, that the earth of Illinois was just as good as that of California, that when she is gone, I shall probably stay here and that she would be perfectly satisfied to find a final resting place in Urbana. And in the peaceful surroundings of the Mount Hope Cemetery, with the University which she learned to love on the North and the prairies to the South, is her grave.

Upon her death Anita wrote:

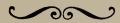
Of what she meant to us who were privileged to know her and what she accomplished for the lonely students at the University and how she started our many interests in Jewish affairs going, I can not write now. We shall do it together later.

This we have now done.

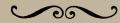
"The Vision apprehended"

Well, inadequately, but to the best of my ability, I have traced Ray's activities before and after she came

to Illinois. I know, better than anyone else, that the story is incomplete, that it hardly gives an adequate picture of what Ray stood for and tried to accomplish, but I have to stop now.

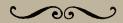


Rest in peace my companion of many years, my inspiring and never failing co-worker who set her goals high. Have I always caught your vision? I hope so.





On Remembering Ray Frank Litman



By Anita Libman Lebeson

Memories of Ray Frank Litman are twofold. There is the woman I knew intimately over many years. There is the hearsay person, built up out of her own recollections and reminiscences, and those of her family—friend and foe alike. It took many years to reconcile the two. Only now a portrait emerges of an arresting, dynamic, uncompromising woman, a person touched with greatness,—a memorable, prophetic woman whose features are boldly etched, whose soft voice still rings in my ears, whose maxims and utterances are indelibly inscribed on my mind.

It was a grey, drab Sunday afternoon in late October, a melancholy time except to the very young, when I ran up the outer steps of old Uni Hall, The long corridors were dark and full of shadows. The air was thick with the smell of chalk and dusty erasers, of unventilated class rooms and old wood. The floors creaked. Here and there oily particles of brown sawdust used to sweep the building added their pungent smell of lumber-mill and wax.

To me it was all very wonderful. I was in my teens.

in that quiet, immaculately kept home, there began a friendship and association which was to have lasting effects on the formation of character and interests, on the close identification with Jewish causes, on synagogue affiliation. Not only for me but for many others was this true. Sunday school teachers were recruited from our little history study group. Menorah Society programs of Jewish interest were determined and planned in the Litman home. Services were prepared for the little Temple to which we all went as a matter of course. The visiting rabbis and the young seminary students who occasionally came our way were entertained and welcomed there. Christian professors who showed an interest in Biblical literature or Oriental or Near East studies were invited to lecture to us. Both directly and indirectly their interest in matters Jewish was fostered and developed. Townspeople who had prospered in Champaign and Urbana were persuaded to subsidize publications of Jewish interest. Prizes were made available to Jewish students for papers on Jewish history. Jobs were found for those who needed them. A sense of fellowship and protection and warm interest in our student activities was to be had in that hospitable home.

We brought all our problems to Ray Frank Litman. She listened well. Her piercing dark eyes, the eyes of a mystic, never left our faces. It was as if each word we spoke was to be weighed and judged in terms of lasting values. There was neither time for nor patience with trivia. She herself was the soul of truth and anything less than literal truth was impossible with her. She spoke slowly, deliberately, as if to make sure that no impulsive distortion or exaggeration could come from her lips. She only interrupted the narrative of

another to ask us to define our terms, to be more literal, to say exactly what we had in mind.

She seemed to have endless time. She was never hurried. Not by the slightest movement did she ever imply that her caller had overstayed his welcome, had trespassed on her personal plans. How she managed was a mystery then as now. For she did her own housework, was a superb and creative cook, kept a spotless house, watched over her husband's well-being, did some gardening, nursed houseplants tenderly. Indeed she had a strange identification with green and growing things.

"I never put flowers into cold water," she would say arranging each bloom tenderly. "It seems that they shrivel in the cold. Rain is warm. The earth is warm. Flowers need to be gently cared for." Children too she adored. Her face would light up when she looked at them. She spoke to them reasonably for she respected them. There was the time when she got into quite an argument with our three-year-old son, David. He insisted that he wanted to sit next to his mother. His place had been set near his father. But he protested vehemently that he wanted his place changed. "Come, David," said Mrs. Litman sternly, "sit where you are told to sit. You are unreasonable." David looked up at her, then at his mother. "I will not," he firmly replied. "She is my relative." It was a new word but recently learned. "Utter nonsense. So is your father a relative." "Only by marriage," shouted David triumphantly and won his point.

Perhaps it was her personal integrity and her rigidity with children which showed another side of her character, one I could neither understand nor reconcile with the woman I knew and had come to love. But then even adults often quailed before her. I have seen

mature and dignified professors act like schoolboys in her presence. Men who in the classroom heaped sarcasm and barbs upon their hapless students walked warily in her presence. It was fun to see her turn the tables. We enjoyed seeing the glib and facile masters of rhetoric wriggle in semantic quandaries, as she would seize upon an obscure phrase and demand its true meaning. Yet in her aloof and Olympian manner there was warmth and love and loyalty. She made it clear that she was our friend, that we could come to her with any problem. She made it hers. In a very real manner we were her responsibility and we knew that she would not fail us.

The Jews were her passion and her deep identification and her pride. She considered herself a member of an ancient and venerable tribe and was forever exploring its labyrinthine history seeking relatives. She maintained that she was of the family of the Gaon of Vilna and so much did we respect her that we thought of her as a feminine counterpart of that great genius of Lithuania, a kind of historical fragment in the flesh.

Graduation from the University of Illinois did not terminate our relationship with the Litmans. Their interest in their graduates continued for all time. Visits to the campus began with a call on the Litmans and went on from there. Letters to and from Mrs. Litman were a regular feature of the relationship. Whenever they visited a city, they looked up and were happily received by those whom they had once accepted into their circle. When my family and I had decided on a California vacation, I found that Mrs. Litman had "mobilized" her nephews and nieces into a welcoming committee. She simply had written ahead making elaborate plans for us. The kindness with which we

were received by the family of Ray Frank Litman I shall never forget. It was overwhelming. Her sister and other members of the family had parceled out the time so that every minute was a delight. "We had orders from Aunt Ray," said a niece by marriage when I protested that they were being too kind.

This is neither the time nor the place to evaluate complicated human relationships. When the mother of these children had become seriously ill, young Ray Frank came into their lives as a mother substitute. And so she was both loved and resented. Such ambivalence is a part of every family situation. Many are the letters which these children wrote to "Dearest Auntie Ray." Yet in their recollections of their childhood she appeared largely as a martinet and a disciplinarian.

The years have a way of foreshortening time. As I grew older, the gulf in time between myself and Ray Frank Litman became insignificant. We met as contemporaries. Small bits of her past became well known to me. That she had been on a Chautauqua circuit with William Jennings Bryan. That she had studied under Isaac Mayer Wise in Cincinnati, the first woman to become his student. That she had opened the Women's section of the World Congress of Religions in 1893 and with Hannah Solomon and Sadie American had helped to found the National Council of Jewish Women. That she had lectured extensively both here and abroad. There was almost a pathological modesty about all she said. It was a narrative of understatement I was to learn when I had seen the magnificent scrapbooks and the many letters she had received from outstanding men and women in every part of the world.

In those days I could not know what an impact she

had on the people she had met as a girl and a young woman. Now I have seen her notebooks. I have read newspaper accounts of her speeches,—lyrical, extravagant descriptions of how she could hold vast audiences spellbound. Of how her prose flowed like music and how her eloquent appeals to her fellow-Jews founded congregations in the outposts of the Pacific Northwest and of how men and women wept when she talked of the sufferings of her people. Frenzied enthusiasm, deep emotional response, unprecedented outpouring of money—these were the tributes to her majestic prose. She must have been in the great tradition of orators.

In her many talks to students she was restraint personified. She spoke quietly, in a softly modulated voice. Her sentences were rhythmic cadences, Victorian in sweep and context. She was a conservative in outlook and a confirmed Republican in politics. Her tolerance was often tried. She could be aroused by injustice but not by ideological differences. Those she dismissed regally with a bland smile, as if to say that it was merely youth and inexperience that would take issue with her more considered opinion. Most arguments she sidestepped as if she considered her young friends callow fledglings who would someday come around to her way of thinking.

There was a moral grandeur about Ray Litman that was derived from the Bible that she loved and knew so well. She had vast angers and boundless flashes of fury against those who oppressed and murdered the Jews. News of pogroms and anti-Semitic outrages plunged her into deepest grief, gave her a sense of immediate sorrow and bereavement that was personal and complete. Every anonymous Jew had a mourner in her. Long before the mass annihilation of Jews in Ger-

many, she predicted unspeakable tragedies. And because she was a prophet of gloom and doom, we avoided her at such times. She frightened us. But she was right. The six million lives that were brutally snuffed out are her eternal witnesses. She had understated coming events. Even she could not forsee bestiality rampant. She did not dream that human decency, dignity, tenderness, saintliness, sweetness, loyalty would be forever extinguished in gas chambers.

The sense of doom and gloom deepened in her with the years. For as the years unrolled, each day's paper was a bulletin of tragedy. She spoke even more quietly than before. She felt as if she were personally surrounded by enemies. Eavesdroppers semed to follow her. Plotters were likely to be spinning nefarious campaigns like huge spider webs around her.

She was a sensitive instrument upon which the sorrows of her people were recorded. She seemed to hear each distant cry of anguish and register it on her great heart.

She died like a soldier, weary of a long and soul-searing campaign. Now her voice is stilled. Her memory is a faint melody. Only her notebooks and letters remain to establish the boundaries of her personality. Time which vanquished her is her ally now. She was so often right—she is now eternally and everlastingly right.

Each person who lives shares his dream and his life with all those who come in contact with him. We are all part of one another. And memory which is like a deep well into which the waters of time flow eternally—memory absorbs the qualities and the ideas, the moods and the strivings of those who have preceded us, as it will absorb and integrate us. So with Ray Frank Litman.

In March, 1894, she explained in an article in *The Californian*—"Why I Preach"; she gave the key to her life, the essence of her philosophy:

I suffer every pain, but my vision is blind to my physical self. All I know is that *I am*, that I suffer . . . I am in torments. . . .

Her compassion was universal. It made her kin to every driven, wandering, homeless man, woman and child. It made her want to reach out across the ocean to comfort and assuage. She died full of years, weighed down by the sorrows of others.

And so I remember Ray Frank Litman.









